Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you intend to get a flu shot this year?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS PHASE 6

September 4, 2009

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE

Homicide Probe

Investigators launched a homicide investigation Thursday into the wildfire north of Los Angeles.

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Duel by Bike

Russell Crowe has set out to prove he is still in gladiator shape–a duel by bicycle.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 21

Heinz-Arnold gets No. 1 spot on ballot

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Precinct 1 Republican candidate Rep. Diego Benavente, left, draws his ballot position number while Commonwealth Election Commission executive director Robert A. Guerrero, second from right, and assistant attorney general Meaghan Hasselshearer, right, oversee the drawing at the commission's office on Capital Hill yesterday morning. Benavente is "No. 6" on the ballot among 13 candidates for Precinct 1.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Republican Party standard-bearers Heinz Hofschneider and Arnold Palacios got the No. 1 spot in the election ballot after yesterday's drawing conducted by the Commonwealth Election Commission.

The Covenant Party's team of Benigno R. Fitial and Eloy Inos is second on the list, followed by independent candidates Ramon Deleon Guerrero/David Borja and Juan T. Guerrero/Joseph Cama-

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Kilili: Prosecute human traffickers

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Sablan

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan said he asked the U.S. Attorney's Office District of Guam and the Northern Marianas to prosecute those involved in human trafficking, adding that it's a "shame" that it is still happening in the CNMI.

"It's happening today. It's a shame and it should be prosecuted," Sablan told members and guests of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce during its general membership meeting at The Palms Resort in San Roque on Wednesday.

When sought for comments, U.S. Attorney Leonardo M. Rapadas said his office has prosecuted human trafficking cases in the past and will continue to do so.

See KILILI on Page 4

Relocation of US troops will test new Japan leader

Hatoyama

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

TOKYO (AP)—Reservations within Japan's incoming government about a plan to move thousands of U.S. Marines off Okinawa will likely be the first test of its leader's efforts to remake the country's relationship with

See RELOCATION on Page 4

NMC study: Alcohol is the most abused drug in NMI

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Three of the most commonly abused drugs in the Commonwealth are alcohol, methamphetamine or "ice," and marijuana, based on a study conducted by Northern Marianas College students in Spring 2009.

The study found that alcohol had the highest substance-related disor-

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Study: Bigeye tuna stocks in Pacific under threat. **PAGE 3**

Red flag up at 17 beaches on Saipan, 2 on Rota. **PAGE 5**

Local

Tudela to undergo heart surgery next week

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela said he would be undergoing heart surgery in the United States next week.

Tudela announced this after signing a proclamation declaring September as 2009 National Month for Drug and Alcohol Addiction Recovery Month in the Municipality of Saipan.

"I will be going off-island for a heart operation. I am afraid, of course, but I know there is God," Tudela told representatives of civic groups attending the proclamation signing.

Present at the signing were partner agencies of the Office of the Mayor, including the Department of Public Health, Northern Marinas Colleges, Transitional Living Center, Community Guidance Center, Commonwealth Diabetes Coalition, CNMI Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Recovery Group, Ayuda Netowrk Inc. and consumers and their families.

"Alcohol and drug abuse is something that we can control. I'm not even a smoker, not even a drinker but I have this heart problem. I don't know why. I ask you to please pray for me," Tudela said.

Tudela will complete his term of office in November. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

20 students sought for Japan exchange program

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela is inviting students from Saipan to participate in the 26th Annual Cultural Exchange Program, which will be held to Tokyo, Japan. There is a limit of 20 students for this year's student cultural exchange trip.

Applicants must be able to meet the requirements in order to travel to Tokyo.

■ You must be a student and attending school from 5th grade to 8th Grade.

■ You must have valid U.S. passport and your passport must not expire within six months from the departure date on Oct. 8, 2009.

■ You must have your parent and / or guardian's approval to travel.

■ You must have permission from your school principal and/ or counselor.

■ You must be in good health.

■ You must have a good moral character.

■ You must participate in a group after-school practice for local and traditional dances and songs before departure to Japan.

Those interested may pick up the application form at the Office the Mayor of Saipan, first floor of Afetna Square, Chalan Tun Thomas P. Sablan, San Antonio, between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Deadline to complete and submit this application is Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2009 at 4pm.

For more information, contact the Mayor's Youth Programs Coordinator, Jema T. Tenorio, at 234-6208/234-6280. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort Job Fair in Kagman

The Kagman Komunidat Association would like to announce that Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort will be having a job fair at the Kagman Community Center on Sept. 8 from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. There will be many job openings for Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort's hotel. Please bring your resume and dress appropriately. ***(PR)***

Chamorro radio talk show to discuss Covenant today

A Chamorro radio talk show called "Marianas Agupa" that is hosted by Glenn H. Manglona will feature Herman Q. Guerrero, a former member of the Marianas Political Status Commission, on Magic 100.3 FM today, Sept. 5, 2009, between 9am to 11am in the morning. Discussion will focus on the issue relative to the Covenant provisions and the relationship between the U.S. and the people of the Northern Marianas. The phone line at the radio station will be open for question during the show. Tune in for more on Magic 100.3 FM today between 9am and 11am. ***(PR)***

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Study: Bigeye tuna stocks in Pacific under threat

By MICHAEL CASEY
AP ENVIRONMENTAL WRITER

AP
In this file photo taken Monday, Feb. 23, 2009, a Filipino fisherman lifts tuna, which is exported to Japan, U.S. and Europe, at the General Santos city port, southern Philippines. Environmentalists want tougher restrictions on the industrial-scale fishing of bigeye tuna in the Pacific Ocean after new research showed that current measures are failing and will do little to sustain fish stocks in years ahead, a researcher said Thursday, Sep. 3, 2009.

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—Environmentalists want tougher restrictions on the industrial-scale fishing of bigeye tuna in the Pacific Ocean after new research showed current measures are failing and will do little to sustain stocks of a fish that is popular in sushi bars the world over.

The findings will intensify a debate between the multibillion dollar fishing industry and conservationists over the best ways to protect 23 tuna species, nine of which are threatened with extinction.

Bigeye and yellowfin tuna, which can grow to 8 or 9 feet (2.4-2.7 meters) long and weigh more than 450 pounds (200 kilograms), are not in immediate danger of being wiped out, but have been hit hard by overfishing. The fish are used mostly for steaks, and in the case of bigeye, sushi.

The western and central Pacific region accounts for 55 percent of the world's tuna production with a value of $4 billion to $5 billion. Tuna stocks in the region have fallen since the 1960s, driven down by increasing numbers of industrial fishing fleets.

In December, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, which regulates commercial fishing from Indonesia to Hawaii, approved measures supposed to reduce catches of bigeye tuna by 30 percent over three years and limit catches of yellowfin tuna to 2001-2004 levels.

But scientists working for the commission found the measures were undermined by numerous territorial exemptions from the catch limits, including coastal waters that surround archipelagic states such as Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. It also found limits on purse seine fishing—an industrial technique where a net is used to surround and capture schools of tuna—are ineffective as they are based on catch rates from 2004 that were higher than average. Also, the fleet sizes allowed under the commission's limits are not those from 2004 but what each country is permitted under various treaties. In the case of the United States, that is twice as many boats as they used in 2004.

John Hampton, one of the authors of the report, said Thursday the commission's measures would only limit big eye fishing to recent "fairly high levels."

"It allows stock to fall below accepted levels that (are required for) long-term sustainability," he said. "That doesn't mean the stocks will collapse completely and go extinct. But it would be reduced to a level that would result in the stock being much less productive than it could be."

Environmentalists say the research shows the current restrictions are inadequate and are calling for tough and swift action by the industry to protect bigeye tuna, which are in danger of being overfished. Yellowfin are less threatened.

"The value of this assessment is that it shows the likely result on high value tuna stocks of barely adequate fishing controls that are then further weakened with loads of exemptions," said Jose Ingles, a fisheries expert for the environmental group World Wildlife Fund.

The commission's Executive Director Andrew Wright said it will meet in December to consider whether to toughen the measures or wait a year to better determine their effectiveness.

Anouk Ride, a spokeswoman for the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, which represents 17 countries and territories including Australia and New Zealand, said her members support tougher measures, including a 40 percent cut in bigeye tuna catches.

Guam *man'amko* on goodwill tour of Saipan

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
CNMI Office on Aging acting executive director Rose Mondala presents a plaque of appreciation to Rita Cruz, president of the visiting group of senior citizens of Yona Talofofo in Guam during a welcome party yesterday. Also in photo are Christiana Michael, Rita Elwais and Johnny Afaisen.

A group of senior citizens from Guam are currently on Saipan for a three-day goodwill and cultural exchange tour.

The group belongs to the Yona Talofofo Senior Citizens Center headed by its president Rita Cruz. They arrived at dawn yesterday and participated in activities with the local *man'amko* at the Aging Center.

Most of them have never visited Saipan before, while others have relatives here.

Cruz said they are here to experience the local culture and tour the scenic spots of Saipan.

They will be having a picnic in one of the beaches today and attend Mass at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral tomorrow.

"We will have time to pray and ask for God's blessings for a longer life for us. We will [also] pray for peace for families and friends," Cruz said.

Cruz said they would also tour the Bird Island, Grotto, Suicide Cliff, Banzai Memorial Park and other tourist spots.

"We will have many memories to bring back home. We will remember this visit for the rest of our lives," Cruz said.

The group, composed of 21 members and five escorts, will leave on Sunday.

"This is history in the making for us. We are very excited to congregate with our fellow *man'amko* here on Saipan," said Johnny T. Afaisen, who is the manager of the group's center.

He said they chose to come to Saipan instead of other areas where they have been in the past like in the U.S. mainland and the Philippines.

CNMI Office on Aging acting executive director Rose Mondala welcomed the visitors during a simple ceremony yesterday and presented them with a plaque of appreciation for the visit.

Mondala said they are also planning to visit Guam next year.

Live-fire exercises on Farallon de Medinilla

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Navy and Air Force will conduct live-fire exercises on the island of Farallon de Medinilla next week.

The scheduled dates and time are as follow:

■ Sept. 9 – 10: from 8am to 2pm, 525 EBS live-fire releases

■ Sept.9 – 10: from 1pm.to 7pm, HSC-25 laser targeting

■ Sept. 9 – 10: from 11am to 12:59am, 96 EBS live-fire releases

■ Sept. 11: from 2pm to 1am, 96 EBS liv-fire releases

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon de Medinilla Training Area on a 10-nautical-mile radius on all quadrants. The public—especially fisherman, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from this area during the time and date indicated.

Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

For more information, contact the CNMI Emergency Management Office's Operations Section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0 or dial CNMI 211 for this advisory. ***(PR)***

Ex-CNMI courts building super allowed to travel

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The federal court has allowed former CNMI courts building superintendent Joseph R. Guzman to travel to Hawaii to accompany a relative.

Guzman had entered a guilty plea to allegation he was in possession of 19 marijuana plants last year.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex Munson permitted Guzman to travel to Hawaii during the period between Aug. 16 to 20, 2009.

Munson granted the travel request after the U.S. government and the defense agreed to let Guzman accompany his stepson, who is going to study in Hawaii.

The judge required the defendant to notify the U.S. Probation Office promptly upon his return to Saipan.

Munson also reset the sentencing from Nov. 10, 2009, to Nov. 23, 2009.

The 48-year-old Guzman pleaded guilty to one count of misdemeanor possession of marijuana.

Munson ordered the temporary release of the defendant upon posting a $5,000 in unsecured bond.

Among the conditions for his release is that Guzman shall not commit any offense in violation of federal, state, or local law.

The defendant is also required to notify the U.S. Probation Office and get permission from the court prior to leaving the CNMI.

Guzman and his counsel signed a plea agreement with the government. Under the agreement, the prosecution will recommend no more than 30 days in prison on Saipan. The prosecution will also recommend a fine of $1,000 and $100 special assessment fee.

The agreement stated that on July 22, 2008, Guzman was found in possession of 19 marijuana plants in various sizes.

Drug Enforcement Administration agents used a helicopter to search for marijuana plantation on Saipan during a two-day operation in July 2008.

A few days after Guzman was questioned by DEA agents in that operation, the defendant resigned from his position as CNMI courts building superintendent.

RELOCATION

From Page 1

Washington while maintaining their strong alliance.

Yukio Hatoyama, riding a landslide victory by his Democratic Party of Japan in Sunday's parliamentary elections, is expected to be formally voted in as prime minister as early as early as Sept. 16, ending more than a half-century of almost uninterrupted rule by the staunchly pro-Washington Liberal Democratic Party.

Though Hatoyama is facing a mountain of economic problems, including Japan's worst unemployment rate since World War II, attention is also keenly focused on his ability to fulfill promises that he will remake Tokyo's relationship with Washington. Hatoyama has said he wants Japan's relationship with the U.S.—a key trade partner and the Asian power's strongest ally—to be more equal.

The transfer of Marines off the southern island of Okinawa could be the first test of that effort, analysts said Tuesday.

Under a deal negotiated with the U.S., Tokyo agreed to foot part of the bill to move 8,000 Marines from Okinawa to a new base in Guam by 2014, easing overcrowding on the Japanese island that hosts more than half of the 50,000 American troops stationed in the country. About 10,000 Marines will remain.

But the accord is murky on a number of points, and one of Hatoyama's first dealings with Washington will be to iron it out.

Another key issue he'll have to address is a long-delayed plan to relocate Okinawa's Futenma Marine Corps Air Station to a new location.

Washington has already tried to head off any attempts by the new government to re-negotiate the terms of the agreements.

"The United States has no intention to re-negotiate the Futenma replacement facility plan or Guam relocation with the government of Japan," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said Monday.

The challenge comes amid concerns over Hatoyama's inexperience in foreign affairs and worries that his desire for more balanced relations with Washington and deeper ties with Asian neighbors could open a rift between the old allies.

Those have largely been fueled by an op-ed published in The New York Times ahead of Sunday's election, in which he suggested that Japan had suffered under U.S.-led globalization.

He appeared to try and distance himself somewhat from the controversy, however, saying in comments broadcast Tuesday on Japanese television that what he wrote "was in no way an expression of anti-U.S. views."

But the Democrats have raised concerns with several components of the accords with the U.S.

Some members, for instance, have questioned Japan's contribution to the cost of moving the troops. It has pledged more than $6 billion. The party is also resisting U.S. plans to build an air base to replace Futenma elsewhere on Okinawa—a component Washington says is integral to the deal.

In August, some 200 people gathered to oppose the use of Futenma at the campus of Okinawa International University, where a helicopter crashed five years ago, damaging a school building and triggering calls for shutting the base. They want the base off the island altogether, not simply relocated to a less congested area.

Hatoyama's party, too, says the base should be moved someplace else in Japan—though no other sites have been suggested. Failure to find a suitable replacement could throw off the timing of the Marines' move and damage the new government's relationship with the U.S.

"Japan-U.S. alliance and security issues will be a crucial test for the Democrats," said Tsuneo Watanabe, director of foreign and security policy at the Tokyo Foundation, a private think tank. "If the Okinawa issues don't go smoothly, it could affect the Japan-U.S. alliance."

Security relations with the United States are good, but Okinawans have long bristled at the difficulties of hosting so many troops, such as crime by U.S. personnel and congestion caused by the existence of the bases that take up a large swath of the island, and analysts said tensions over the Marines' presence could flare up.

NMC

From Page 1

ders in 2005 with 367 cases, doubling to 626 in 2006. The number slightly went down to 502 in 2007 and dropped further last year to 428.

Compared to the two other drugs, alcohol abuse seems to be the most serious problem among agencies and authorities on the islands, with the study noting several arrests and convictions.

Within the first four months of 2009 alone, the total value of bottled alcohol bought by major clubs and restaurants in the CNMI was over $8,000, the study said.

"From 2004 to 2007, cases were high due to lack of manpower in sobriety checkpoints. By 2008, sobriety checkpoints were frequent, DUI [driving under the influence] cases were reduced," the report said.

Cannabis sativa, also known as marijuana or weed, is the next drug with the highest number of substance-related disorders.

In 2005, cannabis use posted a total of 137 cases of substance-related disorders. This figure dropped significantly by more than half the following year at 86. However, marijuana consumption spiked in 2007 when authorities recorded 186 disorders, a 35-percent increase over the 2005 figure. Last year, the number slightly went down to 182.

Methamphetamine, the third most commonly abused drug, had 21 related disorders in 2005 that increased to 66 in 2006. The rampant growth of the drug on the islands showed in 2007, when authorities recorded a total of 119 related disorders. In 2008, the number went down to just 65.

The study disclosed that in 1999, crystal methamphetamine sold for as much as $1,000 per gram. The price decreased to $500 to $600 per gram in 2001.

At the retail level, the drug—also known as meth, ice, shabu, crystal, and glass—is often packaged in a glassine bag that contains one-tenth of a gram and sells for $100.

To curb the proliferation and rampant consumption of these most commonly abused drugs, the government is intensifying campaign and programs for its prevention such as community guidance counseling, frequent sobriety checkpoints, random baggage and cargo screening in airports, seaports, and post office, and employment of more trained canine handlers, as well as the designator driver program.

The study was conducted by students of NMC under the Current Issues class of Sam McPhetres.

KILILI

From Page 1

During the same meeting, Sablan also announced that he's now seeking a one-year delay in the implementation of Public Law 110-229, "only" because the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is not ready to implement the federalization law by Nov. 28.

During a question-and-answer segment, Sablan said he asked U.S. Attorney Rapadas to prosecute those engaged in human trafficking.

"I told the U.S. attorney to do his job and prosecute those involved in these activities," Sablan said, adding that reports and allegations of human trafficking do not help his job in Washington, D.C.

The delegate asked *Saipan Tribune* not to print at this time the name of one of the alleged human traffickers who is running a business on Saipan.

U.S. Attorney Rapadas said he agrees that human trafficking "is a problem that my office has prosecuted in the past and continues to prosecute. We are working with the FBI and Immigration and Customs Enforcement with the establishment of homeland security in the CNMI, so our efforts to continue prosecuting human trafficking will definitely increase."

Rapadas said the Office of the Federal Ombudsman has also been helping his office "but with ICE coming on board, we will definitely see an increase [in prosecution of human trafficking cases]."

In July, the Karidat Social Service told the media that there's been a drop in the number of individuals admitted to the Guma Esperansa, which provides shelter to victims of human trafficking, sexual assault, domestic violence, and for witness protection. Karidat said admission to Guma Esperansa went from 256 in 2007 to 175 in 2008. But there's no breakdown as to how many of these seeking shelters at Guma Esperansa were victims of human trafficking.

In a May 2008 report, Karidat said the incidence of human trafficking in the CNMI almost doubled, from 28 in 2006 to 50 in 2007.

Compared with other U.S. territories, this figure is way up, with American Samoa Hawaii and Guam recording less than 10 combined at that time.

The U.S. Department of Justice itself considered the CNMI a hotspot for human trafficking due to its close proximity to many Asian countries and its lax immigration system, according to Samantha Vardaman, director of programs for Shared Hope International, who visited Saipan in May 2008. SHI is a non-profit organization with the mission to rescuing and restoring victims of sex trafficking.

In the CNMI, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have made human trafficking among its priority issues.

Sablan's request to look into human trafficking cases in the CNMI came months after he told the media in July that he asked the U.S. Attorney's Office to investigate an alleged investment scam. He said the scam involves a group of Korean investors telling other businessmen in Korea that investing in the CNMI will automatically grant them an investor status in the United States.

In August, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said he was able stop Flame Sako Resort & Spa from publishing a marketing brochure that contains "misrepresentation" about the CNMI. The "draft" brochure had Fitial's photo in it.

Flame Sako plans to build a $60 million to $80 million resort and spa north of the Palms Resort in Marpi. The governor said he was able to stop the printing of the erroneous brochure even before Sablan pointed it out to the media.

BALLOT

From Page 1

cho respectively.

The Election Commission started the drawing of lots at exactly 9am yesterday. It was supposed to take three hours but was completed as early as 11am.

No gubernatorial and lieutenant governor contenders were present in yesterday's activity; they were represented by their party chairmen.

Fitial, Hofschneider, and Guerrero are currently off-island, campaigning among absentee voters.

Seen at the drawing of lots were majority of the contenders for the House of Representatives and Senate.

Election Commission officials said the official placement of each candidate on the ballots will be publicized as soon as the board of election adopts yesterday's outcome. The board is scheduled to meet Tuesday noon at the governor's conference room.

Independent candidate Joseph Muna Mendiola, who is running for Precinct 5's seat in the House of Representatives, was elated with the result of yesterday's drawing.

Mendiola got the No. 1 spot among the candidates running for Precinct 5, the same ranking he got during the previous drawing. The results of the previous drawing had been rescinded due to complaints from independent candidates.

Mendiola earlier expressed his unwillingness to give up the No. 1 spot on the ballot. However, he showed up at the commission yesterday with only one hope: to get the same spot again.

"Before I came here, I took it [the No. 1 sign on his vehicle] down… and I just prayed to get the same number today, and I got it!" he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Mendiola was among the six candidates in his precinct that showed up, out of the official eight contenders. He immediately put up the "No. 1" sign again on his car.

There are 110 candidates in the Nov. 7 elections for 40-plus positions in government.

As of Sept. 1, the Election Commission recorded a total of 15,167 registered voters on three islands. The number is expected to jump before the registration deadline on Sept. 18.

Early this week, the election board rescinded its decision to adopt emergency regulations that included changing the ballot format from a one-sheet format to a two-page sheet.

Because of the strong opposition conveyed by independent candidates, who believed the decision as unlawful and unfair, the board was forced to revert back to the original ballot design that was used in the 2005 general elections.

Red flag up at 17 beaches on Saipan, 2 on Rota

The Division of Environmental Quality has raised the red flag on 17 sites on Saipan and advises the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

Samples collected from Aqua Resort Hotel, Tanapag Meeting Hall, DPW Channel Bridge, South Puerto Rico Dump, American Memorial Park, Fiesta Resort, Hafa Adai Beach Hotel, Hafa Adai Beach Hotel drainage, Garapan Fishing Dock, Garapan Beach, Garapan Beach drainage, Chalan Laulau Beach, World Resort, Grand Hotel, Community School Beach, Chalan Kanoa District No. 2 drainage, and Old Man By the Sea on Saipan contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria—enterococci—that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards.

The Division of Environmental Quality has also raised the red flag on two sites on Rota and advises the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

Samples collected from Coral Garden and Mobile Storm drainage on Rota contained excessive concentrations of enterococci that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards.

These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water. However, studies have shown that storm water runoff in tropical environments may also contain these bacteria from the natural environment, which may not be directly associated with public health concerns.

Managaha and Tinian were not sampled this week.

DEQ analyzed samples of marine recreational and storm drainage water from 50 locations on Saipan, 10 on Tinian, 12 on Rota and a total of 11 samples from the shore surrounding Managaha.

For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

SUICIDE CLIFF CLEANUP CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Beautify CNMI's Angelo Villagomez and some visiting Japanese college students pose for a photo during last week's Beautify CNMI cleanup of Suicide Cliff. The cleanup was sponsored by Pacific Eagle and Marianas Resort and Spa.

House panel sets public hearing on health issues

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare will be holding two public hearings on Department of Public Health issues on Sept. 16.

Committee chair Rep. Ralph DLG. Torres (R-Saipan) said the panel will receive testimony on issues involving doctors, emergencies, medical referral and dialysis, among other things.

Torres's office said yesterday they will be inviting officials of the Department of Public Health, private clinics and members of the public interested in knowing more or to air concerns about health issues.

The first hearing will be at 10am in the House chamber on Capital Hill. Another hearing will be held at 6:30pm at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Both hearings will be held on Sept. 16, Wednesday.

"Members of the general public are encouraged to submit written testimony on or before the public hearing and to attend these public hearings to voice out their concerns. Oral testimony will be received during the public hearing," the committee said.

Anyone wanting to submit written testimony prior to the public hearing may drop by Torres' office or e-mail it to rep.rtorres@gmail.com, or fax to 664 8926. All written comments are due on Sept. 16.

Torres earlier said government health officials are now expected to be more active in hiring doctors, particularly in the Commonwealth Health Center's emergency section, citing a July 17 hearing by his committee on public health issues.

"One of the biggest issue is when patients are brought to the hospital, they wait for two to three hours and then only to be informed there is no doctor or at that point they are being directed to see private clinics," he said.

Over 200 volunteers, 10 groups sign up for international coastal cleanup

Organizers have so far enlisted over 200 volunteers on Saipan for the 24th International Coastal Cleanup on Sept. 19.

Lisa Huynh Eller, federal programs outreach and publications coordinator of the Division of Environmental Quality, said Rota also expects the participation of hundreds of volunteers.

She said they are working on getting Tinian involved in this annual event, with the DEQ Brigade and Beautify CNMI coalition taking the lead.

A number of volunteers have already adopted beaches, including South Lao Lao, Cow Town, Marine Beach and Paupau Beach.

Organizers are anticipating more people to sign up between now and Sept. 19.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to participate. Eller said this international effort is a great opportunity for the community to be involved and educated about the importance of coastal areas.

"We hope to raise awareness about the impact of marine debris on public health and the marine environment," she said.

DEQ will be collecting data on the types and weight of marine debris that will be collected during the cleanup.

To request a signup sheet for Saipan or Tinian, contact Lisa Huynh Eller, Olivia Tebuteb or Carlos Ketebengang, DEQ, at 664-8500 or e-mail lisaeller@deq.gov.mp.

For information about Rota's event, contact William T. Pendergrass, ICC Coordinator, or MJ Taisacan, CRMO Administrative Clerk, at 532-0466 or fax 532-1000. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

Chamber to host customer service training

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce Small Business Committee is sponsoring a customer service training workshop next Wednesday, Sept, 9, from 9am to 12pm, at the Chamber conference room.

Subjects that will be covered include:

- Getting your staff to "get" customer service
- Customer Service: Perception and reality
- Attaining a consistent and sustainable customer service atmosphere at your place of business
- Suggestive selling: Customer service that delivers to the bottom line
- World Class Customer Service" Basics of Customer Service and expectation setting session
- Proactive Customer Service: Using questions to provide service that matches and exceeds the customer's expectations
- Emotional Needs in Customer Service: Understanding your customer's emotional driver and tailored service approaches
- Understanding your Customer: Review of differentiated personality styles and how to recognize your customer's style

The workshop facilitators are:

- Jim Arenovski, president of Delta Management, who has years of training experience and whose company provides training in areas such as customer service and OSHA and EEOC compliance.
- Jose Padilla, principal of Red Rock, LLC, a management and technology consulting firm, whose background in customer service and sales includes leading training initiatives focused on enhancing customer interactions.

This workshop is designed for frontline staff and outside sales representatives, as well as small business owners/managers. The workshop is $10 per person for Chamber member companies and $15 per person for nonmember companies. Space is limited and reservations are being accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Call (233-7150) or e-mail the Chamber office at coordinator@saipanchamber.com to make reservations. ***(SCC)***

Investor found in breach of stock purchase deal

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has found an investor in breach of contract with a Japanese investor over a loan and stock purchase deal for a corporation.

Associate Judge Perry B. Inos ruled that Mamoru Ueda has presented undisputed evidence that Hidehito Hida breached their contract.

The contract provided that Hida would sell 180,000 shares of Mugen Corp. to Ueda for $180,000.

Hida admits that Ueda paid him $180,000 and that Ueda never received any shares in return. Instead of arguing that he transferred the shares, however, Hida argued that Ueda "frustrated" his attempts to transfer the shares.

"In making this argument, however, Hida impliedly admits he did not perform his contractual obligation to transfer the shares," said Inos in granting Ueda's motion for summary judgment.

The judge determined that Hida has not shown that a genuine issue of material fact remains for trial "because the facts he contends are in dispute do not constitute a defense and are not material."

As for Ueda's claim for damages, Inos ruled that the plaintiff has not established that the parties intended such damages to flow to the buyer.

Inos also ruled that he does not see how or why Mugen Corp. should be held liable for damages flowing from Hida's breach of contract.

"Mugen Corp. was not a party to the stock transfer agreement," the judge pointed out.

Ueda, through counsel Mark A. Scoggins, filed the lawsuit in December 2008 against Hida and Mugen Corp. for fraud, deceit, and misrepresentation.

Ueda demanded payment of ¥27.3 million and $38,000 in actual damages plus $150,000 in liquidated damages.

Scoggins stated in the complaint that Hida deceived and defrauded Ueda by inducing Ueda to lend Hida monies that he did not intend to repay.

Ueda and Hida had signed a stock transfer agreement where Ueda agreed to purchase 180,000 shares of Mugen Corp. for $180,000.

Mugen Corp. owned and operated the Waft By the Sea restaurant.

Hida explained that the reason he did not transfer any shares to Ueda was because Ueda never appeared to take over the management of Waft By the Sea. Hida said he felt obligated to maintain control of the restaurant for the sake of the employees.

In his decision, Inos said Hida has not made factual allegations supporting a valid defense to Ueda's breach of contract claim.

Inos said the contract provided that Hida was to transfer the shares within a reasonable time after receiving the payment.

"This did not happen," Inos said.

On the liquidated damages issue, the judge said the contract states in plain and precise language that the "buyer" is liable for liquidated damages if he breaches the agreement.

"There is no mention of the 'seller' being potentially liable for liquidated damages," Inos said.

"While it is possible, in certain circumstances, for contracting parties to assign different meanings to commonly understood words, plaintiff has not presented evidence to establish that the parties intended plaintiff's proposed meaning of the word 'buyer,'" he added.

JOHN D. TUDELA
P.O. BOX 505495
SAIPAN, MP 96950

pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF ADOPTION FOR : DORISHA JULIA PANGLINAN TUDELA, Minor Child, By: JOHN DIAZ TUDELA, Petitoner.	FCD AD Civil Action No. 08-0604 NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for adoption for the above-named minor child by John Diaz Tudela, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Adoption will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, on the 16th day of September, 2009 at 9:00a.m. or as soon as thereafter.

/s/ BERNADITA SABLAN
Clerk of Court

JOHN D. TUDELA and JULIE MARIE P. TUDELA
P.O. BOX 505495
SAIPAN, MP 96950
TELEPHONE NO.: 878-1371/484-3188

pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petition for the Change of Name of: JRADLEY VINCE JOHN JOSE PANGELINAN TUDELA, Minor Child, By: JOHN D. TUDELA and JULIE MARIE P. TUDELA, Petitoners.	FCD CN Civil Action No. 08-0605 AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Change of Name for the above-named minor child by John Diaz Tudela and Julie Marie P. Tudela, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Change of Name will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, on the 16th day of September, 2009 at 9:00a.m. or as soon as thereafter.

/s/ BERNADITA SABLAN
Clerk of Court

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER
The Associated Press
Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Setback in Afghanistan

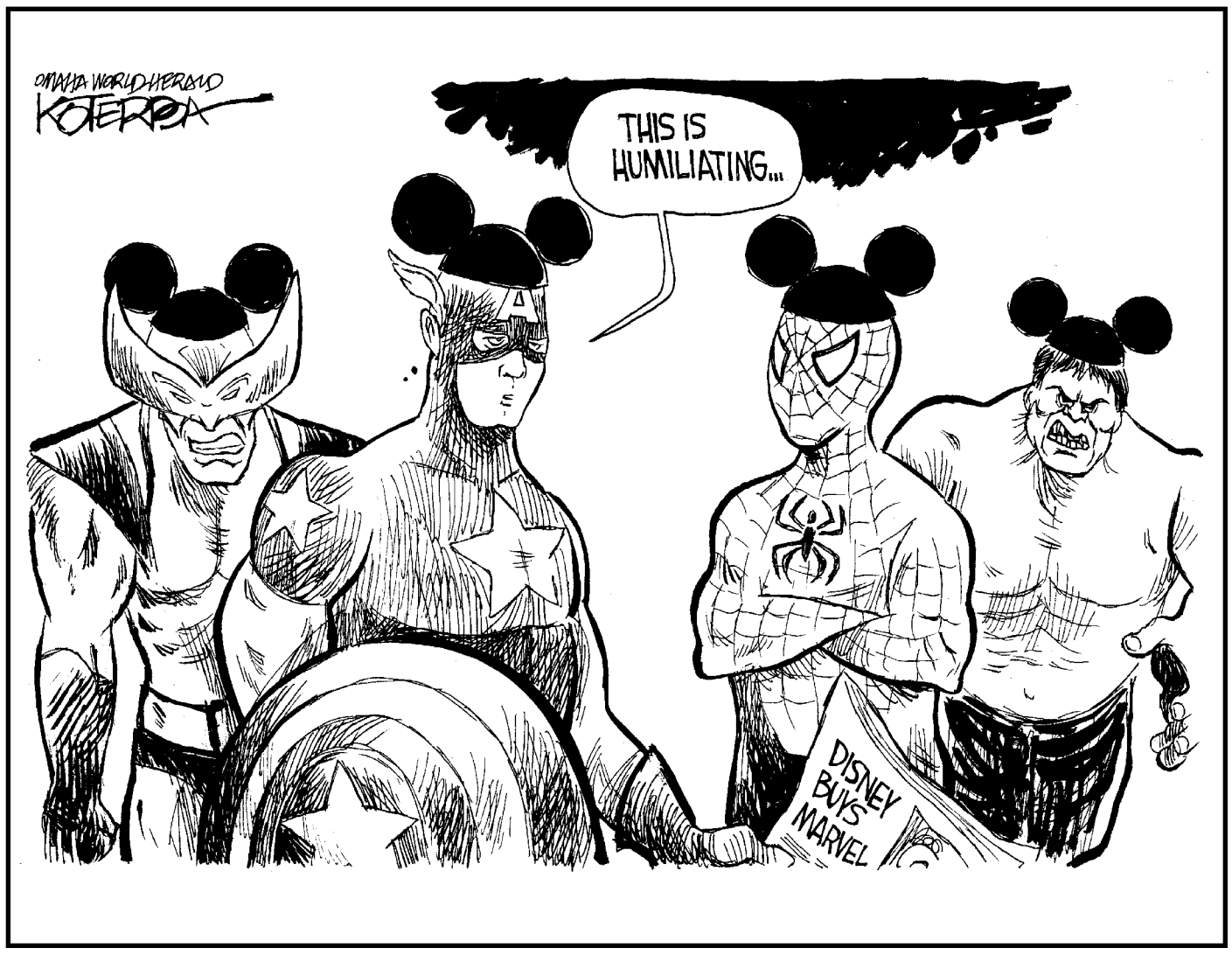
Last month we expected that Afghanistan's elections would mark a modest step forward for the country. Now it appears that they could be a major reverse. Though the election campaign was positive in many respects, Election Day itself is emerging as a disaster of relatively low turnout and massive irregularities—including ballot-box-stuffing on behalf of both incumbent President Hamid Karzai and his leading opponent. Unless the fraud can be reversed or repaired through a U.N.-backed complaints commission or a runoff vote, Mr. Karzai may emerge as a crippled winner, his already weak and corruption-plagued administration facing further discredit or even violent protests.

This grim prospect is particularly worrisome because the United States and its allies were counting on the election to provide the Afghan government with a new lease on public support. They hoped the vote would be followed by a drive to reform both national and local administrations and extend their authority to areas where only the Taliban has been present. That construction of government capacity—call it nation-building if you like—is essential to the counterinsurgency strategy adopted by U.S. commanders during the last year and embraced by President Obama in March.

Unfortunately for the Obama administration, the bad election news has arrived at the same time as a report by the U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, that portrays a "serious" military situation in which Taliban fighters are growing more capable and Afghan and international forces lack the military and civilian resources they need to regain the initiative. Gen. McChrystal is expected to ask Mr. Obama to dispatch more American troops next year—perhaps tens of thousands of reinforcements to the 68,000 U.S. troops already deployed or on the way. The bad election and heavier U.S. casualties this summer, including more than 100 deaths, mean that Mr. Obama will probably come under considerable pressure to deny the additional troops and change course.

The Democratic left and some conservatives have begun to argue that the Afghan war is unwinnable and that U.S. interests can be secured by a much smaller military campaign directed at preventing al-Qaida from regaining a foothold in the country. Sen. Russell Feingold, D-Wis. has proposed a timetable for withdrawal—the same demand the left rallied around when the war in Iraq was going badly. Its most cogent argument is a negative one: that the weakness of the Afghan government

See SETBACK on Next Page



Burma's rising toll: The junta widens a war on ethnic groups

By CHRIS BEYRER and RICHARD SOLLOM
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

It has been a good few weeks for Burma's dictator, Senior Gen. Than Shwe, even though Sen. Jim Webb secured the release of an imprisoned American during his recent visit and even though the sentencing of Burma's democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, after this summer's sham trial was roundly condemned. With all the media attention, Than Shwe got a dose of what he appears to crave most: international legitimacy. And he is assured that Suu Kyi, who won Burma's last free elections in 1990, will remain under house arrest during the 2010 elections. Last month Burma's state-run media even hailed the regime for its humanitarian nature and called for targeted economic sanctions to be lifted.

But is there, in fact, a more humanitarian regime in Burma?

Distinctly negative answers come from Ho Lom village in Burma's Shan State, where junta soldiers burned 62 houses on July 29. Or from Tard Mawk, in the same district, where soldiers burned more than 100 homes. Or from the 38 other Shan villages from which villagers have been forcibly displaced in July and August, part of a systematic and brutal campaign documented by the Shan Human Rights Foundation and the Shan Women's Action Network and reported by Human Rights Watch last month. Eric Schwartz, assistant secretary of the U.S. Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, noted on Aug. 19: "We've been deeply concerned by very recent reports of large-scale displacement, perhaps as many or more than 10,000 civilians ... as a result of increased military activity in northeastern Burma."

Schwartz said this even before the latest round of attacks — against the people of Kokang, an ethnic enclave of Chinese speakers in northeastern Shan State, close to the Chinese border. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that the fighting has driven 10,000 to 30,000 Kokang into China — prompting a rare rebuke from the People's Republic, a longtime trade and investment partner of the junta.

Other ethnic groups, including the Karen in eastern Burma, have faced intensified fighting and egregious rights violations this summer. Some 5,000 Karen have fled into Thailand, according to Human Rights Watch. In Karen State, large numbers of land-mine injuries are being reported as untrained new conscripts, including children, are forced to fight their own people in some of the world's most heavily mined jungles.

These systematic campaigns in Burma's eastern ethnic regions have been marked by allegations of torture, extrajudicial executions and rapes of ethnic minority women and girls. Such mass atrocities are not new. Our collaborative team of medics conducted population-based health and human rights assessments in 2006-07 among more than 2,900 ethnic households in eastern Burma. We found that more than a quarter of all Shan families had been forcibly relocated in the previous year, that in 24 percent at least one family member had been taken by soldiers for forced labor and that in 9 percent of households at least one family member had been injured by a land mine — one of the highest rates ever documented.

The current assaults appear to be part of the junta's strategy for the 2010 elections. The generals are attempting to force their ethnic opponents to become border patrol forces and to participate in their showcase elections. Most of the larger ethnic groups and political parties have rejected these offers, as did the leaders of Kokang. Most, along with Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, have also rejected the junta's constitution, which was drafted without their input and approved in the discredited referendum of May 2008.

Burma's ethnic peoples know they are not living under a new, more humanitarian regime. Quite the opposite: The junta is creating humanitarian emergencies in its quest for control. Shan, Karen, Kokang and other civilians are losing their homes, livelihoods and lives. Their suffering is directly linked to the detention of Suu Kyi and to the crackdown against Burma's democratic forces: student leaders, journalists, independent humanitarian relief workers and courageous clergy of all faiths. Indeed, essentially all the progressive forces opposing the generals are under attack.

Strikingly little international attention has been paid to this murderous turn of events. Yet these ethnic peoples must play a role if Burma is to have any sort of decent future. Suu Kyi knows this; in the only statement her people have had from her in years, given to U.N. Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari in late 2007, she highlighted the need for ethnic participation for true national reconciliation. The Obama administration, which is reviewing its Burma policy, would do well to heed Suu Kyi's advice: Don't forget Burma's ethnic groups. Whatever the administration does about sanctions, it must do much more to press the junta, Burma's neighbors and the junta's supporters to stop the campaign of bloodshed against Burma's ethnic peoples. China has a special role to play, first in providing humanitarian relief to those seeking refuge across its borders and in pressuring the junta to end its brutal campaign. Ethnic warfare and its resultant instability are in no one's interest, except perhaps Than Shwe's. He must not be allowed to continue killing with impunity.

Chris Beyrer is director of Johns Hopkins University's Center for Public Health and Human Rights. Richard Sollom leads the Burma Project at Physicians for Human Rights.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Iraq and Afghanistan aren't ours to win or lose

By CHUCK HAGEL
Special to The Washington Post

The writer is a former Republican senator from Nebraska.

The other night I watched the film "The Deer Hunter." Afterward, I remembered why it took me so many years to be able to watch Vietnam movies.

It all came tumbling back—the tragedy, the innocent victims, the waste. Too often in Washington we tend to see foreign policy as an abstraction, with little understanding of what we are committing our country to: the complications and consequences of endeavors. It is easy to get into war, not so easy to get out. Vietnam lasted more than 10 years; soon, we will slip into our ninth year in Afghanistan. We have been in Iraq for almost seven years.

When I came to the Senate in 1997, the world was being redefined by forces no single country controlled or understood. The implosion of the Soviet Union and a historic diffusion of economic and geopolitical power created new influences and established new global power centers—and new threats. The events of Sept. 11, 2001, shocked America into this reality. The Sept. 11 commission pointed out that the attacks were as much about failures of our intelligence and security systems as about the terrorists' success.

The U.S. response, engaging in two wars, was a 20th-century reaction to 21st-century realities. These wars have cost more than 5,100 American lives; more than 35,000 have been wounded; a trillion dollars has been spent, with billions more departing our Treasury each month. We forgot all the lessons of Vietnam and the preceding history.

No country today has the power to impose its will and values on other nations. As the new world order takes shape, America must lead by building coalitions of common interests, as we did after World War II. Then, international organizations such as the United Nations, NATO, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and GATT (now the World Trade Organization)—while flawed—established boundaries for human and government conduct and expectations that helped keep the world from drifting into World War III and generally made life better for most people worldwide during the second half of the 20th century.

Our greatest threats today come from the regions left behind after World War II. Addressing these threats will require a foreign policy underpinned by engagement—in other words, active diplomacy but not appeasement. We need a clearly defined strategy that accounts for the interconnectedness and the shared interests of all nations. Every great threat to the United States—whether economic, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, health pandemics, environmental degradation, energy, or water and food shortages—also threatens our global partners and rivals. Accordingly, we cannot view U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan through a lens that sees only "winning" or "losing." Iraq and Afghanistan are not America's to win or lose. Win what? We can help them buy time or develop, but we cannot control their fates. There are too many cultural, ethnic and religious dynamics at play in these regions for any one nation to control. For example, the future of Afghanistan is linked directly to Pakistan and what happens in the mountains along their border. Political accommodation and reconciliation in this region will determine the outcome.

Bogging down large armies in historically complex, dangerous areas ends in disaster. In Vietnam, we kept feeding more men, material and money into a corrupt Vietnamese government as our own leaders continued to deceive themselves and the American people. Today's wars are quite different from Vietnam. But the Obama administration, Congress and the Pentagon must get this right because it will frame the global architecture for the next generation. We must put forward fresh thinking. We can no longer hold ourselves to narrow "single issue" engagement when dealing with nations such as China, Russia, India, Brazil, Turkey or South Korea. The United States needs all these countries and many more if we are to engage the most dangerous challenges—not one at a time but all together. Our relationships with these nations have matured since World War II, as these nations have matured. Does anyone believe we will get to a responsible resolution on Iran without Russia? There's a reason we are part of a Group of 20 rather than a G-8. Even the world's largest economies cannot handle today's problems alone.

Global collaboration does not mean retreating from our standards, values or sovereignty. Development of seamless networks of intelligence gathering and sharing, and strengthening alliances, diplomatic cooperation, trade and development can make the biggest long-term difference and have the most lasting impact on building a more stable and secure world. There really are people and organizations committed to destroying America, and we need an agile, flexible and strong military to face these threats. How, when and where we use force are as important as the decision to use it. Relying on the use of force as a centerpiece of our global strategy, as we have in recent years, is economically, strategically and politically unsustainable and will result in unnecessary tragedy—especially for the men and women, and their families, who serve our country.

Are our policies worthy of these Americans' great sacrifices? That question must always be at the fore of our leaders' decisions. Threats to America come from more than Afghanistan. Consider Yemen and Somalia. Are we prepared to put U.S. ground troops there? I doubt we would seriously consider putting forces in Pakistan, yet its vast Federally Administered Tribal Areas and mountainous western border harbor our most dangerous enemies today. We must shift our thinking, now, to pursue wiser courses of action and sharper, more relevant policies.

The president and his national security team should listen to recordings of conversations that President Lyndon B. Johnson had with Sen. Richard Russell about Vietnam, especially those in which LBJ told Russell that we could not win in Vietnam but that he did not want to pull out and be the first American president to lose a war. Difficult decisions with historic consequences are coming soon for President Obama.

Hostages of the Hermit Kingdom

By LAURA LING and EUNA LEE
Special to the
Los Angeles Times

Ling is a correspondent for Current TV and vice president of its Vanguard Journalism unit. Lee is a producer and editor for Current's Vanguard series. To read a longer version of this article and to see more of their work, go to current.com.

We arrived at the frozen river separating China and North Korea at 5 o'clock on the morning of March 17. The air was crisp and still, and there was no one in sight. As the sun appeared, our guide stepped onto the ice. We followed him.

We had traveled to the area to document a grim story of human trafficking for Current TV. During the previous week, we had interviewed several North Korean defectors, women who had fled poverty and repression only to find themselves living in a bleak limbo in China. Some had found work in the online sex industry; others were forced into arranged marriages. Now our guide, a Korean Chinese man who often worked for foreign journalists, had brought us to the Tumen river to document how these smuggling operations work.

There were no signs marking the international border, no fences, no barbed wire. Our guide began making low hooting sounds, which we assumed was his way of making contact with North Korean border guards he knew. The previous night, he had called his associates in North Korea trying to arrange an interview for us. He was unsuccessful, but he could, he assured us, show us the no-man's land along the river where smugglers pay off guards to move human traffic from one country to another.

When we set out, we had no intention of leaving China, but when our guide beckoned for us to follow we did, eventually arriving at the far riverbank. He pointed out a small village in the distance where he told us that North Koreans waited in safe-houses to be smuggled into China.

Feeling nervous about where we were, we quickly turned back. Midway across the ice, we heard yelling. Looking back, we saw two armed North Korean soldiers with rifles running toward us. Instinctively, we ran.

We were firmly back inside China when the soldiers apprehended us. They violently dragged us back across the ice to North Korea and marched us to a nearby army base. Over the next 140 days, we were isolated from one another, repeatedly interrogated and eventually put on trial and sentenced to 12 years of hard labor.

There are things that are still too painful to share, but we do want to explain what took us to northeastern China and the circumstances of our arrest.

We believe journalists have a responsibility to shine light in dark places. That was our goal on this story. We felt it was important to raise awareness about the harsh reality facing North Korean defectors who live in terror of being sent back to their homeland.

We took extreme caution to ensure that the defectors we interviewed and their locations were not identifiable. Most of them said they had fled poverty and hunger in North Korea. One girl in her early 20s said she had been told she could find work in the computer industry in China. She did, but not in the way she had expected. She became one of a growing number of North Korean women working in the Internet sex trade.

In the days before our capture, our guide had seemed cautious and responsible, as concerned as we were about unnecessary risks. That is in part why we made the decision to follow him across the river.

We didn't spend more than a minute on North Korean soil before turning back, but it is a minute we deeply regret.

After we were detained, we took pains to limit the repercussions of our arrest. During rigorous, daily interrogation sessions, we refused to reveal our sources. We furtively destroyed evidence in our possession by swallowing notes and damaging videotapes.

The outcome of our three-day trial was never in doubt. In the end, we were convicted and sentenced to two years for trespassing and 10 years for "hostile acts." Our "hostile acts" were that we tried to tell the story of repression and desperation in North Korea.

After spending nearly five months in captivity, we were granted amnesty by the North Korean government. We can't adequately express the emotions surrounding our release. One moment, we were preparing to be sent to a labor camp; the next we were escorted into a room with President Clinton, who told us we were going home.

We are humbled by the tens of thousands of people who supported and prayed for us. We are indebted to the officials at home and in foreign lands who worked for our release.

At the same time, we do not want our story to overshadow the crucially important story of these North Korean defectors.

Since our release, we have become aware that the situation along the border has become even more challenging for aid groups and defectors. We regret if our arrest has led to increased scrutiny of activists along the border. Their work is courageous and crucial. We hope that now, more than ever, the plight of defectors and of the groups helping them is not forgotten.

SETBACK

From Page 6

and the general backwardness of the country mean that the counterinsurgency strategy, with its emphasis on political and economic development, can't work.

That might prove true. But the problem with the critics' argument is that, while the strategy they oppose has yet to be tried, the alternatives they suggest already have been—and they led to failure in both Afghanistan and Iraq. For years, U.S. commanders in both countries focused on killing insurgents and minimizing the numbers and exposure of U.S. troops rather than pacifying the country. The result was that violence in both countries steadily grew, until a counterinsurgency strategy was applied to Iraq in 2007. As for limiting U.S. intervention in Afghanistan to attacks by drones and Special Forces units, that was the strategy of the 1990s, which, as chronicled by the Sept. 11 commission, paved the way for al-Qaida's attacks on New York and Washington. Given that the Taliban and al-Qaida now also aim to overturn the government of nuclear-armed Pakistan, the risks of a U.S. withdrawal far exceed those of continuing to fight the war—even were the result to be continued stalemate.

Yet if Mr. Obama provides adequate military and civilian resources, there's a reasonable chance the counterinsurgency approach will yield something better than stalemate, as it did in Iraq. The Taliban insurgency is not comparable to those that earlier fought the Soviets and the British in Afghanistan. Surveys show that support for its rule is tiny, even in its southern base. Not everything in Mr. Karzai's government is rotten: U.S. officials have reliable allies in some key ministries and provincial governorships, and the training of the Afghan army—accelerated only recently—is going relatively well. Stabilizing the country will require many years of patient effort and the pain of continued American casualties. Yet the consequences of any other option are likely to be far more dangerous for this country.

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Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. South winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°

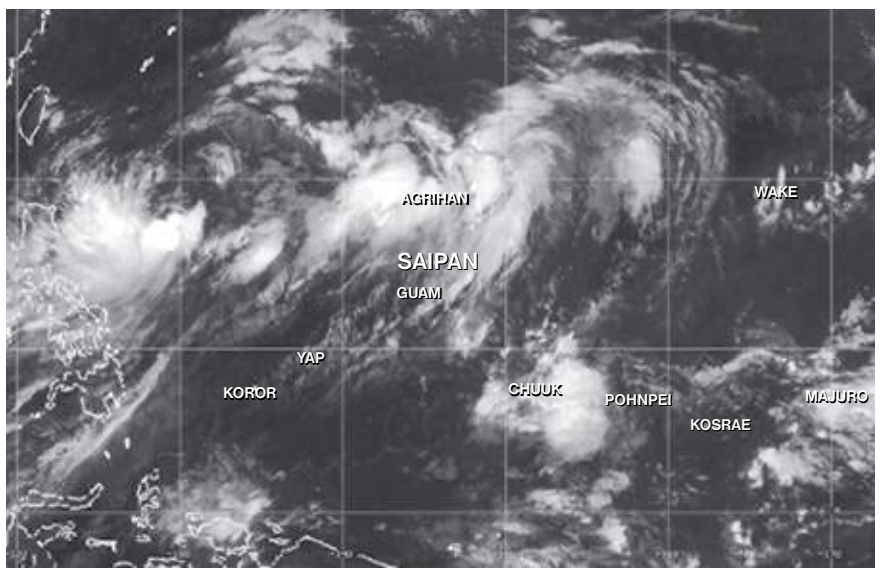
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲86	▼78
Palau	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼78
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Thundershowers	▲87	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼77
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲90	▼78
Majuro	Rain	▲86	▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲61	▼44
Beijing	Showers	▲75	▼61
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲93	▼82
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲85	▼76
London	Partly Sunny	▲68	▼50
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲82	▼64
Manila	Rain	▲83	▼77
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲61	▼46
Miami	Thundershowers	▲89	▼78
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼67
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲84	▼67
Paris	Dreary	▲65	▼49
Pusan	Sunny	▲83	▼66
Rome	Showers	▲82	▼58
Salem	Rain	▲72	▼54
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲70	▼58
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲82	▼64
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	▲82	▼69
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲87	▼66

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough extends eastward 130E at 17N to 21N140E then southeastward trough a circulation centered at 9N158E to end at 3N169E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms cover a large area which includes the Philippine sea and CNMI located within an area bounded by a line from 22N136E to 13N132E to 12N142E to 21N150E back to 22N136E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are also found over Kosrae between 8N and the equator from 153E to 166E and north of Pohnpei within 70 miles of a point at 9N158E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms just southeast of Majuro within 150 miles of a line from 2N167E to 8N178E. Upper-level divergence is generating scattered showers within 90 miles of a line from Minami Tori Shima to 16N155E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
2:06 AM Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet
7:37 AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
2:16 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
8:26 PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:05 AM	6:26 PM
Sunday	6:05 AM	6:26 PM
Monday	6:05 AM	6:25 PM
Tuesday	6:05 AM	6:24 PM
Wednesday	6:05 AM	6:23 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:39 PM	6:14 AM
Sunday	7:15 PM	7:02 AM
Monday	7:53 PM	7:52 AM
Tuesday	8:33 PM	8:43 AM
Wednesday	9:18 PM	9:38 AM

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  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:50am	12:25pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:20am	5:10am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:50am	1:20pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:30pm	1:20pm	4, 5
C09603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
C09605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

C0941	5:30am	8:05am	Daily
NW99	6:05am	8:40am	Daily
NW78	9:00am	2:05pm	Daily via NGO
NW75	3:50pm	6:25pm	Daily
C0943	5:25pm	8:00pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW78	9:00am	11:40am	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA

OZ604/701	2:20am	11:25am	1 via ICN
OZ604/703	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/933	3:30pm	8:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:45am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:20am	11:45am	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:50am	11:45am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:15am	3:50am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:10am	2:40am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09598	2:10am	3:50am	5, 6 via ROP
C09316	2:20am	3:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:20am	11:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	2:00pm	2:50pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

C0942	9:25am	1:55pm	Daily
NW76	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW77	6:35pm	1:40am+1	Daily via NGO
NW100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily
C0944	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:55pm	2:20am+1	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW77	9:10pm	1:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA-SAIPAN

OZ702/603	12:45pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	12:45pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:00pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	10:55pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ716/605	12:30am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday		
	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday		
	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday	5:30am-6:30am	
Morning prayer		
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

SEPT. 5, 2000

CUC wants govt to settle $12-M

The legislative proposal to transfer responsibility of paying government utilities to each department and agency is a welcome move, but the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation still insists on settling unpaid bills amounting to over $12 million. CUC Executive Director Timothy P. Villagomez said the move by the Legislature will help in cutting power and water consumption of public offices because agencies and departments will each have to pay what they use. "That's a good idea," he told in an interview, adding the government has been implementing conservation measures that have resulted to lower utilities costs in recent months.

CNMI asked to show Saipan is a profitable route

The Commonwealth's efforts to encourage more foreign carriers to dispatch air transport services into the Northern Marianas depends largely on the government's ability to make a strong presentation among airline companies that Saipan could be a profitable route. "If Saipan can make a case that it could be a profitable route, then it is currently easier for the four incumbent combination carriers—Northwest, United, Japan Airlines and All Nippon Airlines—to begin service between any point in Japan and any point in the U.S. including Guam and Saipan as they can operate without any frequency limits," said Airports Council Senior Vice President for International Affairs Diane I. Peterson.

SEPT. 5, 2001

Police nets suspected drug lord

The reported 170 grams of crystal methamphetamine or "ice" seized from David Tanaka Diaz, which police claimed to be the biggest drug bust in the CNMI this year, was understated. An inventory submitted to the court revealed that almost 290 grams of ice and marijuana were confiscated from Diaz, who once served a prison term, also for drug-related offenses. The 47-year-old Diaz was arrested in an operation by a combined team of law enforcers led by the Drug Enforcement Agency-CNMI Drug Task Force. Aside from this, government operatives also seized a gun and a hand-held radio tuned to police frequency from Diaz's car bearing license plate no. AAZ-097, which had been the subject of a search warrant issued by Superior Court Presiding Judge Edward Manibusan.

AGO: Revoke sex workers' entry permits

The Attorney General's Office is asking the Department of Labor and Immigration to revoke the entry and work permits of more than 50 nonresident workers who were allegedly engaged in prostitution activities. CNMI Attorney General Herb D. Soll said petitions seeking to revoke the entry and work permits of 52 alien workers had been filed before the DOLI for action. Soll, who is also chair of the Tourist-Related Crime Prevention Task Force, stressed that the petitions were meant to prod the DOLI to take appropriate actions against the nonresident workers, and not the establishments they work for.

SEPT. 05, 2002

AGO expected to issue opinion today on actual budget ceiling

Reiterating the gist of his letter to the House of Representatives on Tuesday, Gov. Juan N. Babauta assured lower chamber lawmakers yesterday that not a single cent of the House's money has been impounded and that they can continue operating until the end of this month. Which is exactly what most House lawmakers did. Despite Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider's statement about the lower chamber's possible closure due to the budget deficit, all legislators' offices remained open yesterday, though most employees took advantage of their paid sick leave or vacation leave benefits to make sure that they will be paid for work done. During a noon meeting with four members of the House of Representatives' leadership, Babauta said the Legislature could still continue normal operations since the administration is operating on the understanding that the legitimate budget ceiling for Fiscal Year 2002 is $249 million-the funding level the last time a budget was passed.

Autopsy on Saburo's body sought

The Department of Public Safety asked the Attorney General's Office to request for an autopsy on the body of Moses Saburo, who reportedly died of head injuries caused by unknown circumstances at dawn Saturday. DPS-Criminal Investigation Bureau officer-in-charge Capt. Juan S. Salas disclosed yesterday that two police officers-Mark Taisacan and John Santos-are currently working on the case, including the request for the AGO to file for an autopsy order. Moses Saburo, the first CNMI resident who mustered courage to admit publicly that he carries the virus that causes AIDS, died at dawn Saturday. He sustained head injuries.

Business

Fact check: Biden snubs problems with stimulus

WASHINGTON (AP)—Vice President Joe Biden proclaimed success beyond expectations Thursday for the $787 billion economic stimulus, but his glowing assessment overlooks many of the program's problems, including delays in releasing money, questionable spending priorities and project picks that are under investigation.

Biden

In a speech aimed squarely at Republican criticism and public skepticism over the costly program's effectiveness, Biden said accomplishments over the past 100 days provide proof of promises kept when he and President Barack Obama began rolling out the plan earlier this year.

"The Recovery Act is doing more, faster and more efficiently and more effectively than most people expected," he said.

The stimulus program includes tax cuts, billions for Medicaid and unemployment benefits, and a massive federal investment in education, environmental projects, technology and traditional infrastructure work. The administration has struggled to make the case that the huge spending program has delivered real economic recovery at a time when the nation's unemployment rate threatens to top 10 percent.

Biden, Obama's chief stimulus cheerleader, proudly pointed to more than 2,200 highway projects Thursday funded by the program, but didn't mention the growing frustration among contractors that infrastructure money is only trickling out and thus far hasn't delivered the needed boost in jobs.

"It is difficult to understand why more communities aren't moving to put their stimulus funds to work while they are experiencing these kinds of job losses," Stephen E. Sandherr, head of the Associated General Contractors of America, said in a statement this week. "Coping with the red tape required by the stimulus ought to be worth it to help put neighbors and friends back to work."

The problem is with money for building projects, not roads and highways, Sandherr said.

Biden noted 192 airports targeted for improvements with stimulus money, but made no reference to the investigation launched after a federal watchdog raised concerns about how the projects were selected.

Transportation Department Inspector General Calvin Scovel said last month he will examine the Federal Aviation Administration's process for selecting programs for the $1.1 billion in grant money. His announcement came after his office discovered that the Obama administration used stimulus money to pay for 50 airport projects that didn't meet the grant criteria and approved projects at four airports with a history of mismanaging federal grants.

And Biden praised the more than 2,400 military construction projects paid for with stimulus money, but ignored the millions of dollars in savings the Defense Department lost because it hasn't competitively bid many of the jobs.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Improving economy not likely to lower jobless rate

WASHINGTON (AP)—The economy is showing consistent signs of improvement, but probably not enough to stop employers from cutting jobs or to keep the unemployment rate from rising. The Labor Department is expected to report Friday that the jobless rate increased to 9.5 percent in August, from 9.4 percent in July, as employers cut 225,000 jobs. But the economy isn't expected to grow strongly enough this year to persuade companies to ramp up hiring. Most economists expect the unemployment rate to top 10 percent by early next year.

Oil hovers near $68 ahead of US jobs report

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices hovered near $68 a barrel Friday in Asia as investors looked to a U.S. unemployment report later in the day for signs of economic recovery. Benchmark crude for October delivery was up 25 cents to $68.21 a barrel by midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract Thursday slipped 9 cents to settle at $67.96. Oil has traded near $68 a barrel for the last three days as traders look for clues on the strength of the U.S. economy.

Toyota Prius top-selling car in Japan for 4 months

TOKYO (AP)—An auto industry group says Toyota's hugely popular Prius hybrid ranked as Japan's top-selling car in August for the fourth straight month. The Japan Automobile Dealers Association said Friday the Prius kept the top spot in auto sales with 21,669 vehicles sold. Honda Motor Co.'s Fit compact was No. 2 in August sales. The association said gas-electric hybrid cars were selling well in Japan thanks to government subsidies and tax breaks.

Nation

Homicide probed in massive LA-area arson fire

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Investigators launched a homicide investigation Thursday into the wildfire north of Los Angeles after determining that the gigantic blaze—which has killed two firefighters, scorched 226 square miles and destroyed dozens of homes—was set intentionally.

"We believe that this was caused by someone intending to set a fire," sheriff's spokesman Steve Whitmore said at an afternoon briefing.

Officials said forensic evidence at the fire's point of origin revealed that the wildfire—among the largest in Southern California's history—was an act of arson. Whitmore declined to elaborate on the evidence due to the ongoing investigation.

The two firefighters died Sunday when their truck careened off a steep mountain road.

Los Angeles County Fire Deputy Chief Mike Bryant said he was glad investigators were making progress, but that the arson finding "doesn't mend my broken heart," he said.

"We got to put this fire out so no one else gets hurt," he added.

Earlier Thursday, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger toured a fire-ravaged community where the fire left dozens of homes in ruins, encountering piles of twisted metal and rubble as firefighters began to bring the blaze under greater control.

The blaze was 38 percent contained Thursday, up from 28 percent the previous day.

Schwarzenegger talked to residents about their losses and later thanked firefighters for all of their work in putting out the flames. At one point during the tour, the former bodybuilder picked up a 30-pound barbell located amid the wreckage.

"Even though we are still battling those fires, we are now trying to help get people's lives rebuilt," Schwarzenegger said. "When you see this kind of devastation, it's horrible to lose your home, your personal belongings."

Despite the overall progress against the fire, firefighters dealt with a flare-up overnight in a remote canyon as strong downslope winds "just kind of blew the fire up," said U.S. Forest Service official John Huschke. Twenty-five people in 11 homes were evacuated in the canyon area.

AP

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger picks up a dumbbell in a burned out home while touring a neighborbood destroyed by wildfires in Big Tujunga Canyon in Tujunga, Calif., Thursday, Sept. 3, 2009.

White House signals openness to health compromise

WASHINGTON (AP)—Even as liberals urge President Barack Obama to demand bold, far-reaching changes to the nation's health care system, the White House signaled openness Thursday to compromises that might attract moderate congressional Democrats as well as some Republicans.

Obama believes in "fundamental principles" about overhauling health care, top presidential adviser David Axelrod told The Associated Press, but "he's not dogmatic about how we get there."

Axelrod's comments did not definitively answer how hard Obama will push for the most ambitious parts of his proposal, including health insurance for virtually all Americans and a government-run plan to compete with private insurers. But his diplomatic tone was in keeping with the administration's approach of refusing to flatly demand several parts that are dear to Democratic activists who helped elect him.

Those are the type of conciliatory hints that frustrate many liberals. They fear Obama will dilute the bold health care proposals he campaigned for, even though Democrats control the House, Senate and White House. One group, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, sent a mass-distributed e-mail quoting a Texas man saying he is "dropping out of political activism" because of his disillusionment with Obama over health care.

Also, former President Bill Clinton told Esquire Magazine that Obama should forge ahead with his health care proposals. "I wouldn't even worry about the Republicans," Clinton said. Obama is doing the right thing, he said, "even though he's jamming a lot of change down the system."

But many Democrats wonder if Obama really will jam a robust plan past overwhelming GOP opposition and the reservations of many centrist congressional Democrats eyeing their next election. Those Democrats will listen carefully for clues when Obama addresses a joint session of Congress next Wednesday night.

Axelrod's cautious answers Thursday might offer little comfort to those seeking forceful signs from the administration.

Asked if Obama might accept a Republican senator's idea for creating a public health insurance option only if private insurers prove unwilling or unable to meet certain affordability targets, Axelrod replied: "We need choice and competition within the pool that's created."

Gates says it's not time to leave Afghanistan

WASHINGTON (AP)—Facing eroding public support for the war in Afghanistan, the Pentagon chief said Thursday that the Obama administration's effort in the eight-year-old conflict is "only now beginning." Defense Secretary Robert Gates also said he disagrees with people who say it's time to get out of Afghanistan.

Several recent public opinion polls have shown Americans expressing declining support for the idea of sending more troops to the conflict and falling confidence in how the campaign is going. But at a Pentagon news conference, Gates challenged the public perception that the effort is getting away from the administration.

"I don't believe that the war is slipping through the administration's fingers," Gates said. "The nation has been at war for eight years. The fact that Americans would be tired of having their sons and daughters at risk and in battle is not surprising."

Gates argued that President Barack Obama's new strategy in Afghanistan hasn't even been given a chance to work.

"I think what is important to remember is the president's decisions on this strategy were only made at the very end of March; our new commander appeared on the scene in June," Gates said, adding that the extra troops Obama ordered are not even all there yet, nor is the "civilian surge" he wants on hand to help.

"So we are only now beginning to be in a position to have the assets in place and the strategy or the military approach in place to begin to implement the strategy," he said.

The new U.S. and NATO commander, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, on Monday delivered a classified assessment of how the war is going and is expected in the coming weeks to ask for more troops and money to turn the war around.

Obama speech to students draws conservative ire

DALLAS (AP)—President Barack Obama's back-to-school address next week was supposed to be a feel-good story for an administration battered over its health care agenda. Now Republican critics are calling it an effort to foist a political agenda on children, creating yet another confrontation with the White House.

Obama plans to speak directly to students Tuesday about the need to work hard and stay in school. His address will be shown live on the White House Web site and on C-SPAN at noon EDT, a time when classrooms across the country will be able to tune in.

Schools don't have to show it. But districts across the country have been inundated with phone calls from parents and are struggling to address the controversy that broke out after Education Secretary Arne Duncan sent a letter to principals urging schools to watch.

Districts in states including Texas, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Virginia, Wisconsin have decided not to show the speech to students. Others are still thinking it over or are letting parents have their kids opt out.

Some conservatives, driven by radio pundits and bloggers, are urging schools and parents to boycott the address. They say Obama is using the opportunity to promote a political agenda and is overstepping the boundaries of federal involvement in schools.

"As far as I am concerned, this is not civics education - it gives the appearance of creating a cult of personality," said Oklahoma state Sen. Steve Russell. "This is something you'd expect to see in North Korea or in Saddam Hussein's Iraq."

ACROSS THE NATION

CDC study: Swine flu deaths higher in older kids

ATLANTA (AP)—The first detailed study of U.S. children killed by swine flu found the outbreak differs from ordinary flu in at least one puzzling respect: It appears to be taking a higher toll on school-age youngsters than on babies and toddlers. At least 40 children have died, accounting for about one in 13 U.S. swine flu deaths, scientists with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday. Two-thirds of those already had high-risk health problems, confirming what officials have been saying about who is most vulnerable to swine flu. It is not clear whether the new virus is more dangerous than ordinary seasonal flu for kids, though some health officials suspect it is. But the analysis shows some preliminary and important differences:

Police: Garrido was arrested in 1972 rape case

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Another allegation of sexual abuse emerged Thursday against kidnapping suspect Phillip Garrido, when Antioch police disclosed he was arrested nearly 40 years ago on suspicion of drugging and raping a 14-year-old girl. Garrido was accused of sexually assaulted the girl at an Antioch motel in April 1972 after giving her barbiturates, Antioch police Lt. Leonard Orman said. Garrido was set to be prosecuted in the case but the charges were dropped when the girl refused to testify, Orman said.

3 killed in suspected street racing crash in Fla.

HOLLY HILL, Fla. (AP)—Police in coastal Florida say three people were killed in what they believe was a street racing crash. Volusia County authorities say a red sports car was seen speeding with another car Thursday night when the red car lost control in Holly Hill, about four miles north of Daytona Beach. The red car crashed into a concrete wall along a sidewalk. Holly Hill Police Chief Mark Barker says the car was completely split in half and that speed was likely a factor in the crash. Emergency personnel say a male and two females inside the car were killed instantly. The driver of the other car took off.

American Airlines cleared in bias lawsuit

DETROIT (AP)—A judge on Thursday ruled in favor of American Airlines in a lawsuit by five men of Iraqi descent who claimed their nationality caused a captain to cancel a flight to Chicago in 2007. Capt. John Plummer's decision to return to the gate in San Diego was not "arbitrary and capricious," a key legal standard in the case, U.S. District Judge Paul Borman said. "The fact that the individuals who engaged in the suspicious conduct were of Middle Eastern/Iraqi descent does not support the conclusion that the decision to return to the gate was race-based rather than fact-based," Borman wrote.

Asia

North Korea says uranium enrichment in final stage

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea said Friday that it is in the final stages of enriching uranium, a process that could give it a second way to make nuclear bombs in addition to its known plutonium-based program.

North Korean state media said officials had informed the U.N. Security Council it is forging ahead with its nuclear programs in spite of international calls to abandon them.

"Reprocessing of spent fuel rods is at its final phase and extracted plutonium is being weaponized. Experimental uranium enrichment has successfully been conducted to enter into completion phase," the Korean Central News Agency reported.

The U.S. and North Korea's neighbors had been negotiating for years with the North to dismantle its plutonium-based nuclear program, which experts say has yielded enough weaponized plutonium for at least half a dozen atomic bombs. North Korea walked away from those talks earlier this year.

The U.S. had long suspected that the North also had a covert uranium enrichment program, which would give it a second source of nuclear material. North Korea for years denied the claim but in response to U.N. sanctions announced in June that it could enrich uranium.

The United States' special envoy on North Korea said any activities in the area of nuclear development are "of concern to us."

"These are issues we are dealing with as they arise and we maintain the need for cooperation and dialogue and complete denuclearization" of the Korean peninsula, Stephen Bosworth said in Beijing during an Asia trip to discuss how to bring North Korea back to disarmament talks.

Enriched uranium would provide the North with an easier way to build nuclear bombs compared to reprocessing plutonium. Uranium also can be enriched in relatively inconspicuous factories that are better able to evade spy satellite detection, according to experts in the U.S. and at South Korea's Institute of Nuclear Nonproliferation and Control.

Uranium-based bombs may also work without requiring test explosions like the two carried out by North Korea in May and in 2006 for plutonium-based weapons.

Security out in force in western Chinese city

URUMQI, China (AP)—Police imposed tight security in Urumqi as residents voiced anger Friday, a day after thousands marched to protest a series of needle stabbings that appeared ethnically motivated in a city already on edge from deadly rioting.

Chinese officials had put a security cordon around the city Thursday after more than 10,000 people, mostly from the Han Chinese majority, took to the streets to demand increased security in Urumqi, the capital of the western region of Xinjiang.

The protesters want punishment for those behind the July riots between Han Chinese and Muslim Uighurs and culprits in a series of stabbing attacks with needles in the past couple of weeks that state media has said targeted predominantly Han victims.

Demonstrators said police beat some protesters, but there were no major clashes.

Paramilitary police with shields, sticks and submachine guns slung over their backs sealed off People's Square, where demonstrators had shouted down politicians. About 100 green trucks parked on the plaza.

Group of six to eight security forces guarded intersections in the downtown area, although there were no signs of new protests forming. No one was allowed into the area without identification showing they lived or worked there.

Residents voiced anger Friday that the government had not done enough to protect them from the stabbings.

Japan wonders if new leaders have economic vision

TOKYO (AP)—Now that the Japanese have overthrown the old guard, worries are growing the new leaders lack a long-term vision to turn around the hobbled economy.

The Democratic Party of Japan swept to power in last weekend's parliamentary elections, largely because of voter disgust with the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party and their inability to address the country's underlying problems.

The opposition promised to expand the social safety net with handouts for families with children and farmers, toll-free highways and a higher minimum wage.

But critics say such programs were mainly designed to woo voters and fall short of mapping out a road to growth or tackling deeper issues like Japan's aging, shrinking population and its ballooning national debt.

"In short, what they are going to do is unclear," said Koetsu Aizawa, economics professor at Saitama University. "They were out to win an election. And they have barely addressed the issues of structural reforms and economic growth."

Adding to the concerns is a widely circulated opinion piece by Democratic leader Yukio Hatoyama—the likely new prime minister—that sharply criticizes the U.S. business model for growth that Japan had emulated during the postwar period.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Army: 11 killed in spate of violence in Thai south

PATTANI, Thailand (AP)—A spate of shootings, bombings and military raids left 11 people dead and more than 20 wounded over the past two days in Thailand's insurgency-plagued south, officials said Thursday. The violence was the latest to hit Thailand's three southernmost provinces, where more than 3,700 people have been killed since a Muslim insurgency flared in January 2004. A bomb hidden in a motorcycle parked outside a row of open-air shops and restaurants in Pattani city exploded Thursday, killing one Buddhist man and wounding 24 others, said army spokesman Col. Parinya Chaidilok. Three victims were in critical condition.

Security assigned to watch guards at Kabul embassy

KABUL (AP)—The U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan has banned alcohol and assigned American personnel to watch the embassy's security guards following allegations of lewd behavior and sexual misconduct at their living quarters. The announcement of the crackdown on embassy guards came as NATO reported the deaths of two U. S. service members in southern Afghanistan. A British soldier was also killed, according to the U.K. military. The two U.S. personnel were killed by a bomb while on patrol in the region, which has seen some of the most intense fighting of the war. No other details have been released.

World

UN peacekeeping chief in Darfur says war over

CAIRO (AP)—The outgoing U.N. peacekeeping chief in Sudan's Darfur region said the world should no longer consider the long-running conflict a war after a sharp decline in violence and deaths over the past year.

Activists and Darfur residents disagree, and the comments by Rodolphe Adada heightened anxiety that there will be less international focus on resolving the root problems in the troubled region.

U.N. peacekeepers have recorded a sharp decline in fatalities from violence. There were 16 deaths in June, compared to an average 130 deaths per month last year.

"We can no longer talk of a big conflict, of a war in Darfur," Adada told The Associated Press this week before stepping down as head of the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur, or UNAMID.

"I think now everybody understands it. We can no longer speak of this issue. It is over," he said.

The Darfur conflict began in February 2003 when ethnic African rebels took up arms against the Arab-dominated Sudanese government in Khartoum, claiming discrimination and neglect.

U.N. officials say the war has claimed at least 300,000 lives from violence, disease and displacement.

AP

In this Saturday, Oct. 27, 2007 file photo, Joint AU and UN head of mission for Darfur, Rodolphe Adada, talks to reporters ahead of the opening session of the Darfur peace talks in Sirte, Libya.

Drug treatment center targeted in Mexico, 18 dead

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP)—Neighbors mopped blood from the sidewalk outside a drug rehabilitation center Thursday, cleaning up the carnage after gunmen lined up patients against a wall and then riddled them with bullets, killing 18.

It was the third attack on a drug treatment center in Ciudad Juarez. Chihuahua state authorities said Thursday they were investigating reports that the centers have turned into hideouts for drug smugglers being sought by police and hit men from rival gangs.

Public Safety Secretary Genaro Garcia Luna, Mexico's top law enforcement official, said rehab clinics were also being used as recruiting and training centers by drug cartels.

He told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview that a recently detained drug suspect belonging to the La Familia cartel oversaw various private, nonprofit drug rehab centers across western Michoacan state. The suspect Rafael Cedeno claimed to have trained 9,000 recruits for the cartel in 2008.

Iraq seeks UN help in recent bombings

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Iraq's prime minister has asked the U.N. Security Council to investigate recent bombings outside two government ministry buildings in Baghdad and prosecute the alleged perpetrators, the country's U.N. envoy said Thursday.

Ambassador Hamid Al Bayati said a letter to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon requested the U.N. chief to ask the Security Council to establish an independent investigation commission and an international tribunal.

U.N. deputy spokeswoman Marie Okabe said Thursday afternoon that the letter was being sent to this month's council president, U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice, who was expected to distribute it shortly to the 14 other council members.

Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki claimed Thursday that Syria was sheltering armed groups wanted for cross-border attacks, but Al Bayati said the letter to the secretary-general "doesn't mention a country or any name."

WORLD BRIEFS

Aide: Netanyahu considering settlement freeze

JERUSALEM (AP)—Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would be willing to consider suspending construction in the West Bank for several months—but first plans to authorize hundreds of new apartments there, an aide said Friday. The U.S. has been pressing Israel to agree to a settlement freeze, and the Palestinians have said they would not resume peace talks unless Israel suspends construction on lands they want for a future state. Friday's statement was the first time an aide has said in the name of the prime minister's office that such a move could be imminent. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to disclose plans Netanyahu has not officially announced.

Canada appealing controversial refugee case

TORONTO (AP)—Canada's federal government said Thursday it would challenge a contentious Canadian immigration board panel ruling that granted refugee status to a white man from South Africa who claimed persecution from blacks in his home country. Danielle Norris, spokeswoman for the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, said the government will ask the Federal Court to hear the challenge. She earlier said department lawyers were studying the panel's decision. South Africa had asked the Canadian government to appeal to the court. The ruling has angered many in South Africa, where race remains a highly sensitive issue.

Iran assembly approves most of hard-line Cabinet

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad received a broad mandate Thursday as parliament backed his main Cabinet choices—naming the first woman minister since the 1979 Islamic Revolution but showing international defiance by supporting a suspected mastermind in the bombing of an Argentine Jewish center that killed 85 people. The conservative-dominated legislature rejected Ahmadinejad's choice for energy minister and two other women nominated for less prominent posts. The rest of his 21-member Cabinet was approved.

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, September 5, 2009

216,176 OFWs enlist for overseas voting

By LIRA DALANGIN-FERNANDEZ
INQUIRER.NET

A total of 216,176 new overseas absentee voters registered in various posts abroad for the May 2010 presidential election in the six-month registration period that ended August 31, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Wednesday.

The new registrants represented about 22 percent of the DFA's target of one million new absentee voters for next year's election.

The DFA, however, said it was still awaiting the final tally from the various registration posts abroad.

According to the DFA, the following foreign service posts recorded the highest number of registrants: Hong Kong (21,905), Los Angeles (13,205), Dubai (12,477), Singapore (11,296), New York (6,496), Riyadh (6,120), London (5,821), Tokyo (5,257), Taipei (5,243), and Toronto (4,873).

Another 19,644 new voters registered at the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency, 14,990 at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, 6,869 at the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, and 6,319 at the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

Period of nat'l prayer for death of INC leader

MANILA, Philippines—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has issued a proclamation declaring a period of national prayer for Iglesia ni Cristo leader Eraño "Ka Erdy" Manalo, who died Monday at age 84.

Arroyo motored to the INC Central Temple on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City to pay her last respects to the late INC executive minister after arriving from Libya around 9pm Wednesday.

She condoled with Manalo's son and successor Eduardo Manalo, Malacañang said.

While at the Central Temple, Arroyo issued Proclamation No. 1874 declaring a period of national prayer for Manalo "effective immediately until the day of interment."

"During this period, the entire nation is requested to offer prayers for his eternal repose and in thanksgiving for the gift of his life and contributions to our nation," she said in the proclamation.

Arroyo noted that Manalo was considered a "great spiritual leader" and "father" to the INC flock that "he has guided with the teachings of God toward spiritual growth."

"The nation joins the Iglesia ni Cristo members in mourning the loss of their beloved leader, with prayers for his eternal peace and the ministry's continued guidance and strength to bear their sorrow and loss," she said.

For almost 10 minutes on Wednesday, men and women, especially the elderly, wept in the 10,000-seat Central Temple during the first worship service since Ka Erdy died.

His remains lie in state at the temple. His coffin was closed during the service.

The weeping intensified when the singing led by the church choir began and Armand F. Ernie, minister and administrator of the INC Metro Manila East Locales, led the first prayer.

"Our beloved Executive Minister is gone," Ernie said, drawing more cries of agony and loss among INC members.

WORKERS PROTEST AP

Female protesters wearing masks are bound by mock chains to dramatize their plight during a rally Friday, Sept. 4, 2009 in front of the Department of Labor in Manila, Philippines. The protesters condemned the displacement of workers due to the closure of a lingerie factory and other companies and the alleged government inaction for the protection of workers.

Free health screening for OFWs tomorrow

The Philippine Consulate General will host the 3rd Quarter's "Free Health Screenings for OFWs" tomorrow, Sept. 6, at the ground floor of the Marianas Business Plaza building. Registration is at 6am to 8am and the actual conduct of the activity will be from 8am until noon.

Macaraig

Philippine Consul General Medardo G. Macaraig said this quarterly health screening program by the Philippine Consulate, Philippine Overseas Labor Office, and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration is done in cooperation with the Filipinos Volunteer Medical Team and Hardt Eye Clinic.

The medical services include blood pressure, blood sugar, and vision check-ups. Macaraig is reminding OFWs who will avail of blood sugar level check-up to refrain from taking solid and liquid food from 12 midnight to the time of actual testing.

In the last two quarters of this year, there were a total of 647 and 171 OFWs who availed of the blood pressure/sugar and vision check-ups and the average number of OFWs who come for check-ups every quarter is at 400.

"We wish that this project would continue so that we can increase the level of awareness on diabetes prevention and control, hypertension prevention, eye/vision pressure correction among the OFWs and among ourselves as public servants," said Macaraig.

"Through this project, the Philippine Consulate General hopes to reach more and serve, even if in the modest way, the medical needs of our toiling OFWs by fostering the spirit of volunteerism among the Medical Volunteers Team and Hardt Eye Clinic, in the true spirit of Filipino *bayanihan* here on Saipan," he added. ***(PR)***

Stamping of 'signature of bearer' on the new Philippine passports

The Philippine Consulate General announced yesterday that Filipino citizens who are holders of Machine Readable Passports bearing serial numbers from XX0000001 to XX1500000 or those passports without the "signature of bearer" may now visit the Philippine Consulate and submit a written request for the stamping of their passports.

The stamping of the "signature of bearer" shall be done after verification of the issuance of the passport. No fees shall be charged for this service. ***(PR)***

LABOR FRONT

Important things new workers should remember

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Q: If you are a new alien worker in the CNMI, what should you take note of regarding your employment contract?

A: The contract will be for one year. The contract may be renewed for additional years, but that is not guaranteed. According to Labor's notice to foreign national workers, the employer may decide not to offer a renewal at the end of the one-year contract. If no other employer wants to hire the worker, the worker will be required to return to his or her country of origin.

■ ■ ■ ■

Q: What should a new alien worker in the CNMI remember about his or her wages?

A: The contract will specify the wage that an alien worker will be paid. The current minimum wage in most cases is $4.55 per hour. According to Labor, the worker must be paid at least that wage unless the contract specifies otherwise. A worker may be offered overtime for which the minimum wage rate is 1.5 times the wage rate in the contract. But the availability of overtime is not guaranteed. The employer is not required to offer overtime. If business conditions do not warrant overtime, there may be no overtime work available.

It is possible that the minimum wage will increase in the future. If it does, the contract provides that the worker will automatically be paid the higher wage if the job is covered by the legislative provision for the increase.

■ ■ ■ ■

Q: If you are a new alien worker in the Commonwealth, what should you remember about employment-related fees?

A: New foreign worker should remember that it is against the law in the CNMI to pay employment-related fees. According to Labor, while an alien worker is in the CNMI, he or she is *not* required to pay fees in connection with the employment except for an annual $25 immigration fee for an entry permit card. All other fees will be paid by the employer. The worker should not pay these fees if someone asks him or her to do that.

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Visa-free visit for Chinese tourists

By KRISTINE L. ALAVE
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines--More Chinese tourists are expected to flock to the Philippines as they can now enter the country without having to apply for a visa, the Department of Tourism said.

Tourism Secretary Ace Durano hailed the new immigration rule which allows Chinese nationals on business and pleasure trips to enter and stay in the Philippines for seven days without visa.

"The department recognizes the strong contribution this development does to the continuing programs and marketing activities the country has been actively doing to spur economic growth through tourism," said Durano.

The new immigration rule was issued upon the recommendation of the Tourism Department.

Undersecretary for Tourism Planning and Promotions Eduardo Jarque Jr. said: "This welcome change will certainly help the Philippines attract more Chinese tourists to the country who are known to make holiday plans favoring countries with visa-free arrangements."

Panlilio backs Aquino, drops 2010 bid

By DJ YAP
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Following the example of Senator Manuel "Mar" Roxas II, Pampanga Goernor Eddie Panlilio announced Friday that he was dropping his plan to run for President to give way to Senator Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

At a press conference at Club Filipino in San Juan City, Panlilio, a Catholic priest, formally renounced his bid for the presidency and declared he was backing Aquino, the only son of slain Marcos opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. and the late president Corazon Aquino.

"We have decided to renounce our bid to run for President and instead give our wholehearted support and trust to Senator Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III," he said in Pilipino, reading from a prepared joint statement with Isabela Governor Grace Padaca, who could not make it to the event.

Panlilio said he made his decision after a series of consultations with Aquino, his colleagues in the good governance and ethical movement Kaya Natin! and supporters in Pampanga and other parts of the country.

"If Sen. Mar Roxas could sacrifice all he had done and his own dream to be president, it should be easier for all of us to make the same sacrifice," Panlilio said. He called on other aspiring presidential candidates and political parties to make the same sacrifice and rally behind Aquino.

AP

Philippine Liberal Party President Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas III, left, and partymate Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III flash the "Laban" sign which means fight during their press conference at the historic Club Filipino, in suburban San Juan, east of Manila, Philippines on Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2009.

Calls for Aquino to run for President have snowballed since his mother died on August 1.

On Tuesday night, Roxas announced he was dropping his presidential bid to support Aquino for President in 2010.

The following night, Aquino said he would go on a spiritual retreat to contemplate whether he should seek the presidency in 2010.

Mancao tags Erap, Ping, 4 others in Dacer killing

By TINA SANTOS, JEANNETTE ANDRADE
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Deposed president Joseph Estrada, Sen. Panfilo Lacson and former Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino were Thursday named in court by former Senior Supt. Cezar Mancao as among those behind "Operation Delta," the purported plan to kill publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer.

Mancao also named the late Supt. Teofilo Viña, former Supt. Glenn Dumlao, and former Chief Insp. Vicente Arnado as directly involved in the operation, according to Mancao's lawyer Ferdinand Topacio.

The former police officials were members of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), which Lacson once headed and of which Mancao was a ranking officer.

"Mancao ended today his direct testimony," Topacio told reporters after the hearing. "Basically, he affirmed his earlier affidavit where he named those people who were involved in Operation Delta, which, according to him, was specifically designed to neutralize Dacer."

Reporters were barred from covering the hearing at Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 18 under Judge Myra Garcia Fernandez.

Mancao is to be cross-examined by the defense on Sept. 10.

Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito were abducted in Manila on Nov. 24, 2000, taken to Cavite, and killed by strangulation on the same day. Their burned remains were found months later.

'I've said everything'

In an interview after the hearing, Mancao said he was hoping that his testimony would be "substantive" enough for him to be dropped from the list of the accused and to become a state witness.

"I've said many things; I've said everything. I've testified on who were involved and who masterminded this case," he said in Filipino.

Mancao also lashed at those whom he had implicated but were now claiming that they did not know him.

"They're liars," he said without naming names. "After all our efforts, they're now where they are. It was we who worked hard, who killed ourselves. ... It's so unfair."

Both Estrada and Lacson, the President and the Philippine National Police director general, respectively, at the time of the twin murders, have consistently denied involvement.

In a statement he issued Thursday, Lacson said:

"Either Mancao deliberately lied under oath or he didn't know what he was talking about in court. I am sorry for him. While I can understand the tremendous pressure being applied by this administration on him, he should at least stick to the truth and respect his oath by stating only the facts, and not hearsay and his opinion.

"For the nth time, I maintain my innocence and even absence of knowledge pertaining to the Dacer-Corbito case."

'Only for survival'

Lawyers for Lacson and the other accused in the double murder case told reporters that Mancao's testimony was intended for his survival.

"He is just complying [with what is expected of him]," said Alex Avisado, Lacson's legal counsel. "This is only for his survival. We understand his position. We understand that he has to save himself."

Avisado claimed that Mancao's testimony was based on "hearsay."

"He never said he received direct orders from President Estrada or Lacson," Avisado said.

The lawyer said Mancao mentioned the names of seven persons "who, as far as he knows, have knowledge of the murder of Dacer and Corbito."

Avisado said Mancao named Estrada, Lacson, Aquino, Dumlao, Viña, Arnado and himself as "those who, in one way or another, may have knowledge of Operation Delta."

Lawyer Dante Atienza, who represents the other accused, particularly SPO1 Crisostomo Purificacion, Rommel Rollan and Margarito Cueño, claimed that Mancao based his enumeration on dispatch slips he had found at the PAOCTF office.

"He does not directly know anything about Operation Delta. When he found the dispatch slips, he asked around. He asked Colonel Dumlao what Operation Delta is, and who are part of the operation. That is the basis of his knowledge," Atienza said.

Overheard discussion

According to a source at the Manila RTC, Mancao told the court that he had knowledge about Operation Delta because he overheard Lacson and Aquino discussing it.

The source confirmed that Mancao named Estrada, Lacson and Aquino, among others, as those who had direct involvement in the twin murders.

"Mancao told the court that he knew that the operation had the approval of Estrada and Lacson," said the source, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to give information to the media.

The source added: "He said that while they were on board a vehicle on the way to a restaurant, he heard Lacson ordering Aquino to proceed with Operation Bero, to which Aquino answered: 'We have another operation, the Operation Delta.'

"According to Mancao, Lacson then ordered Aquino: 'Pagsabayin nyo na.'"

The source said Mancao told the court that he was wondering why his men were being used in the operation.

Mancao also testified that it was Dumlao who conducted the tactical interrogation of Dacer, the source added.

Dumlao was also summoned to the court Thursday but was later ordered by the judge to leave.

"The court prohibits a witness to hear the testimony of a fellow witness," Topacio explained.

Heavy security

Dumlao arrived at Manila City Hall at around 1:45 p.m., a few minutes ahead of Mancao, his former superior.

Both Mancao and Dumlao were escorted by heavily armed agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Ricardo Diaz, chief of the NBI counterterrorism division, said additional security for the two men was provided following the killing on Wednesday of witness Jimmy Lopez.

Members of the Manila Police District bomb squad were seen inspecting the court premises a few hours before the hearing.

As in previous hearings, journalists were barred from covering the court proceedings.

Aside from a notice stating that only parties to the case were allowed inside the courtroom, a copy of the Supreme Court en banc resolution dated Oct. 22, 1991, regarding live TV and radio coverage of court hearings was posted on the courtroom door.

A member of the court staff said the resolution was posted Thursday morning upon the order of Judge Fernandez.

Earlier at the NBI, Mancao lashed at Estrada who had denied knowing him.

'Who else?'

"He is a liar. After all the service you gave him, he is just going to leave you hanging," Mancao told reporters minutes before he was taken to court.

Mancao initially did not name the person he was referring to. But when asked by reporters if he was talking about Estrada, he said: "Who else should I be talking about?"

He added: "I worked under him 24/7, sacrificed a lot to help maintain his being an anticrime czar. It is unfair of him to say that he does not know me. I knew he was a womanizer and he likes gambling, but now he is a liar."

Asked if one of the reasons he hid out in the United States before being deported was his fear of ending up like witness Jimmy Lopez, Mancao said: "Matagal na akong takot (I've been afraid for a long time).

"I do not want to make a conclusion [on Lopez's killing]. Investigations are going on. Investigators are looking at all angles. But I am not ruling out the possibility that it could have something to do with the [double murder] case, considering the timing."

Mancao also said he was now unafraid to disclose what he knew.

"I have mustered the courage…" he said. "I am thankful with the way the NBI is providing me security. I am not afraid, not at all. But I have to be careful because I want to first tell the truth. I will face this battle and come out with the truth."

Asked to comment, Estrada denied Mancao's accusations. He refused to comment on the new charges, saying it would be a waste of time.

"I don't want to dignify that," he said.

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The price of economic exodus

By JOHN M. GLIONNA
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

SANTA BARBARA, Philippines—Looking down the main drag of this farm town, Police Chief Eric Noble marvels at the modern conveniences—byproducts of the fierce ties binding Philippine families.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Edgar Doria, left, and his wife, Janet, right, want to leave their home in the Philippine city of Santa Barbara to seek work in Canada. They plan to leave with relatives their infant daughter, seen here, and two nephews they have been looking after whose parents already work abroad.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

A mechanized tiller is used to plow a paddy in the Philippine city of Santa Barbara. Funds from family abroad have allowed residents to buy land and modern conveniences.

Sturdy houses with concrete foundations now replace the thatched huts of a generation ago. There are new cars, washing machines, children attending private schools and former sharecroppers who have purchased the farms where they once worked as lowly laborers.

Such economic progress has come from remittances, the staggering $1 billion sent to families nationwide each month by Filipinos working overseas in an attempt to overcome extreme poverty and joblessness in their native land.

Since they began leaving their island nation in droves in the early 1980s, Philippine workers have become a staple in other nations worldwide, with the money they send home in many cases remaining steady despite the worldwide financial crisis.

Filipinos sent a record $1.5 billion home in June as more sought work abroad. Remittances for the first six months of 2009 reached nearly $8.5 billion, a 2.9 percent increase over the same period last year.

In her annual state of the nation address in July, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo hailed remittances as a driving force behind the economy. Labor Secretary Marianito Roque separately described the remittance system as a source of pride.

"The flow of overseas worker money in an unstable global economy demonstrates the resiliency of the Filipino people," Roque said. "Under the worst circumstances, our workers are getting jobs and sending home more money than ever. They are keeping the boat stable."

But some critics say the money comes at a continued social cost. The poverty-stricken nation of 90 million has seen 10 million workers—more than 10 percent of its population—join the overseas labor force.

The exodus of trained teachers, health professionals and engineers, some say, has done the Philippines more harm than good as those much-needed services go elsewhere.

There are also distinct social problems that arise when heads of households leave for greener economic pastures, officials say.

Although Noble, the police chief, praises the financial boost remittances give his town, he said the system is draining the Philippines of a prized resource: its people.

"Every day you look and shake your head," he says, "to see that someone else is gone."

■■■

Many Santa Barbara residents realize they must leave their isolated town to achieve a better life. But with millions of the poor living atop garbage dumps and under bridges in Manila, they know their nation's capital is not the solution.

And so they go abroad: One in 10 of Santa Barbara's 80,000 residents work in places such as Italy, Taiwan, Singapore and the U.S.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Locator map details the Philippine city of Santa Barbara.

But recent months have hit hard. Since last fall, when the global financial crisis struck, many overseas workers have been forced to secure second and even third jobs to keep the remittance flow constant.

About 200,000 overseas Filipinos have lost their jobs since then, economists say. Many have returned to the Philippines, where, accustomed to the better salaries and working conditions abroad, they often do not want to take any available jobs.

Others are hounded by job placement businesses to repay hefty travel and work setup fees the agencies have laid out in advance of workers leaving the Philippines. "They're stalked by loan sharks who threaten their lives if they do not pay," said Garry Martinez, chairman of Migrante International, a watchdog group.

The remittance system has also altered the lives of the stay-at-home families of overseas workers.

A recent International Monetary Fund study found that many extended families of overseas Philippine workers are refusing to pursue jobs at home that they consider too low-paying, preferring to rely on their monthly remittance cut.

There are social problems as well.

As parents leave home, children get left with relatives or friends who may not provide adequate supervision, which can lead to substance abuse and gang membership, says Tony Sarmiento, a Santa Barbara city official in charge of monitoring the overseas worker program.

"The worst part of this human export policy is that (the government doesn't) make the hard choices back home," said Benjamin Diokno, a professor at the University of the Philippines School of Economics.

Some analysts say the Philippines must find ways to raise salaries to keep trained professionals from leaving the country. Statistics show U.S. salaries for some professions are more than 10 times higher than in the Philippines.

Teachers and nurses can make $25,000 to $45,000 in the U.S. doing work that pays about $3,600 a year in the Philippines, according to professional associations.

"We don't work toward a dynamic economy that would create more jobs," Diokno said. "Instead we rely on that paycheck from abroad."

■■■

Far from home, Lenin Posario is busing tables in Alberta, Canada, and mowing lawns to make ends meet.

He has made twice the salary he was making as a banker in Santa Barbara, enough to put his two oldest children in private school. But the loneliness sometimes threatens to drive him mad.

His wife, Ruth, was six months pregnant with their third child when he left nearly two years ago. He was headed for Canada to provide the family with a better life. Still, she felt abandoned.

"I was pregnant and emotionally unstable and suddenly a single mother," she recalled. "I couldn't stop crying."

"It's the price we have to pay, or our families will suffer," he said, sitting in his living room on a visit to Santa Barbara.

^(Optional add end)

Maryann Bollesar also knows the anguish of missing her family. Two years ago, she joined her husband in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where the former teacher works as a helper in a real estate office.

She left her two young sons with her younger brother in Santa Barbara. Each Friday, she talks to them over the Internet, able to see them via remote camera.

"I see how much they've grown without me, and I want to burst into tears; I miss them so much," Bollesar said. "But I try not to cry in front of them."

Her son Francis Ivan, now 6, a boy who likes basketball and hamburgers, stood in the living room of his uncle's home and talked about a mother he hasn't seen in two years.

"I want to hug her," he said, staring at the floor. "Every week, I ask her, `Mommy, when are you coming home?' "

But the boy's life is about to take another lonely turn. The uncle he lives with, Edward Doria, wants to move to Canada. He and his wife plan to leave their own newborn daughter, along with their two nephews, behind with other family members.

Doria said he tries not to feel guilty.

"It's a toxic choice, but we have to go," he said. "We're leaving the Philippines for the sake of the people we love."

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Motorcyclists rush past a public market in Santa Barbara, Philippines. The market was built with remittances from the city's many residents who work abroad.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Amalia's 'happiest birthday'

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—My second mom Tita Nena (Amalia Fuentes) was so overwhelmed with the surprise birthday party at Attica that her kids Liezl and Jeric organized.

"It's my happiest birthday ever," she said. "I thought Jeric was just going to pick up some of his DJ stuff at the bar. He kept forcing me to go up with him. Yun pala nandoon na guests ko."

The celebration couldn't have come at a better time. Two days before Tita Nena's party, she went through an ordeal at a police station.

"My son Jeric and I were shocked when he was being arrested at home because of a libel case." she related. "Dapat may resolution muna ang case. Wrong procedure sila. I did everything I could as a mother to make sure Jeric doesn't spend even one night in jail because he did nothing wrong. He just defended me in his blog online. Thank God!"

No cheesy tribute

Ogie Alcasid celebrated his birthday with a bang at the clubhouse of Ayala Hills Estate. Regine Velasquez's gift to her honey is a state-of-the-art recording equipment. The songbird was sans makeup and not in a diva outfit.

"Nakakaasar magsuot na sobrang mahal na shoes na masakit naman sa paa [laughs]," Reg said. "The birthday boy also dressed down."

That set the relaxed mood of the bash. Besides, the couple is really so simple and laid-back off-cam. Ogs and Reg are not the types that do excessive PDA. During the party, they exchanged loving glances across the room.

While Reg sang "Till They Take My Heart Away," onstage, Ogs did back-up vocals in the corner. There was no need for a duet or a cheesy birthday tribute. Their love was very much in the air.

Spotted at the fete were John Estrada and GF Priscilla Meirelles, Ara Mina, Iza Calzado and her new BF, Dingdong Avanzado, Bing Loyzaga, Jaya, Michael V and wife Carol, Dodot and Mikee Jaworski, Agot Isidro and hubby Manu, Antonio Aquitania, Wendell Ramos, Mother Lily, Wilma Galvante, Sheree and Gian Magdangal.

Ogie had a mini concert with his guests. "May 1001 Songbook dito," he announced. "Songs in all languages for you to choose from. Nakaka-pressure mamili [I feel pressured in choosing]. But for me walang sinabi ang songbook at ang songwriter in me [the songbook and the songwriter are nothing]. Suko ako sa Songbird [Hats off to the songbird]. Taas kamay ako [I raise my hands]!" Reg could not stop blushing.

Say 'yes'

Jolina Magdangal's cool dad, Tito Jun, sent me this text: "Jolina had a solo concert in Kawai Island last Aug. 30 and she sung the National Anthem at Brian Viloria's boxing match in Honolulu last Aug. 31.

When, oh when, will Jolens say "yes" to her musikero suitor? So she can sing love anthems again.

Maui Taylor

Jacko's Neverland

I was so touched when my dear friend from way back, Louie Heredia, sent me a Michael Jackson T-shirt which he bought near MJ's Neverland ranch. Sweetness is in everything Louie does. The pasalubong came with this note:

"I couldn't resist sending you a photo of us four—Randy Santiago, Gino Padilla, Raymond Lauchengco and myself—outside the gate of Neverland, Michael Jackson's paradise. We just got back from our US-Canada tour, which was successful naman, thank God! Iba talaga ang '80s—unbeatable ang songs!

"Our producers were so nice and so hospitable, they even took time out to bring us to Santa Barbara. Aside from the wine tasting in the winery, billeting us at the posh Sulvank was the highlight of our visit to Sta. Barbara, no less than Neverland.

"Para kaming mga sira kasi nag-pose pa kami sa labas ng gate a la MJ. I was forcing Gino Padilla to wear his MJ costume pero nahihiya. Kung ako lang yon, isusuot ko talaga ang Michael Jackson costume. Kaso si Boy George ako.

"I thought of you while we were there because I know how much you love MJ. Talo pa rin kami ni IC kasi in the flesh niya nakasama onstage si MJ. Take care, darling!"

Indecent show?

Maui Taylor wonders why she and her co-stars in a fashion show last Holy Week held in Bantayan Island are being sued by a Cebu politician.

"It's so unfair," she laments. "We are artists doing our jobs. How can they say that our show was pornographic when it was just a simple bikini fashion show. We were not even a part of the whole event.

"As soon as we got to the island, we were told that the priests asked the producers to edit what we were suppose to wear which our costume designers did. And we started the show at 1 a.m. so technically it was no longer Black Saturday.

"They say there's this code that we didn't follow. We're not aware of it because di naman kami taga Cebu. I hope we're not being used for political reasons."

Sexy outfits are "Taylor" made for Maui but she keeps it within the boundaries of decency.

Happiest place

Vicki Belo sent me this text all the way from the US: "Sis, I am in Disney World. Feels great to be a kid again. My talk here went really well. Would have been married 30 years today (sigh). Thank you for your undying love and support."

After the craziest episode in her life, Vicki truly deserves to unwind in the happiest place on earth.

Role model

Megastar Sharon Cuneta's daughter KC Concepcion was the biggest winner at the first "Us Girls" August Awards held last Aug. 20 at the New Eastwood Mall Open Park. It was hosted by Angel Aquino, Iya Villania and Megan Young.

KC took home the "Us Girls Icon Award" for exemplifying the qualities the program is all about—smart, updated with the latest trends, independent, adventurous and a role model.

Other awardees were: Jigs Mayuga, Barbi Chan, Bobby Carlos and Krist Bansuelo, "Make-up Artists of the Year"; Rey Ilagan, Bianca Santiago, Liz Uy and Pam Quino, "Stylists of the Year"; Bea Soriano, Divine Lee, Bianca Valerio, Marie Lozano, and Anne Curtis, "Most Fashionable Women of The Year"; Kim Chiu, Isabelle Daza and Tweety De Leon, "Faces of The Year." "Us Girls" is a show that's a must for every fashionista!

Medical group suspends Hayden Kho

MANILA, Philippines—Cosmetic surgeon Hayden Kho has been suspended for a year by the Philippine Medical Association for "conduct offensive to the profession," his lawyer said Thursday.

Kho, who faces charges for recording steamy trysts with his girlfriends, including actress Katrina Halili, has accepted the PMA's position, lawyer Lorna Kapunan said in a Makati City forum.

But Kapunan clarified that the cosmetic surgeon has been suspended only from the association but not from practicing medicine since the Professional Regulation Commission has yet to decide on the issue. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

TAKE CHARGE

Shopping for an insurance policy

Editors Note: This is part of Take Charge of Your Money, a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: I've been receiving proposals for years from insurance agents and only started looking at them closely. I noticed that one offer for a term insurance is much cheaper. I hesitate to call the agent as my query may be seen as strong interest to buy. Can you help me? Should I take term insurance because of the cost?

Answer: Life insurance is one of those things you need to have to protect your family in the future. "The main reason to purchase life insurance is to protect you and the people who rely on you (your dependents) against disaster," wrote the authors of *The Citibank Guide to Building Personal Wealth*. "The most obvious problem is if you die before old age. If this happens, your dependents are likely to be in financial trouble, but adequate life insurance would pay out a lump sum of money to ease their distress."

Today there are many life insurance products being offered that it may seem a bit confusing to distinguish one from another. Basically, there are just two types (whole and term), but they come in various kinds with different features and benefits.

■ Whole life insurance pays out benefits to the beneficiaries upon the insured's death, whenever it may be. It gives you insurance coverage for the duration of your whole life, thus the term. Premiums may be paid for life, or for a limited number of years. It may be participating or nonparticipating—participating means you get a share in the profits of the company, and this amounts to dividends. Whole life insurance has a cash value, and policy owners may avail of policy loans.

Some whole life insurance policies are termed variable universal life insurance, which allows policyholders to determine where premiums will be invested and have a share in the gains of that investment. Others are endowment policies which give you or your beneficiaries added cash benefits at a certain time in the future. Still other kinds of whole life insurance merge the benefits of health insurance in the package. You can look at all these as forced savings and investments.

■ Term life insurance is also referred to as "pure" life insurance. It offers insurance coverage for a fixed term, say 10 or 25 years. According to *The Citibank Guide to Building Personal Wealth*, "There is no savings element or any guaranteed payout unless you die while you are covered." This means that if your term life insurance is for 25 years, your beneficiaries won't get anything if you die on the 26th year, unless you have renewed your insurance. "This makes term insurance much cheaper than other varieties, and for most people it is a good option to choose, provided that you appreciate that the premiums you pay are for insurance only—there is no investment element."

Term insurance comes in many kinds, as written in *The Citibank Guide to Building Personal Wealth*. In "level term insurance," the payout sum does not change throughout the term. In "decreasing term insurance," the payout sum decreases over the term. "Increasing term insurance" is its exact opposite, where the payout sum increases over the term to guard against inflation. "Convertible term insurance" makes it possible for the policyholder to convert the policy from term to whole life at any time, regardless of health conditions. "Renewable term" allows the policyholder to renew the policy at the end of the term without regard for his or her state of health.

Now which is better? Term insurance is indeed cheaper, but there are not much benefits as compared to whole life insurance. However, if you already have or are planning to have health insurance and a separate investment plan designed to meet your financial goals, you may not need the added benefits of whole life insurance. Premiums for whole life insurance can be expensive, so if money is tight, get term insurance instead.

Over time though, insurance gets more expensive as the prospective policyholder advances in age. And sometimes it may get harder to have one's life insurance policy application approved as one gets older due to poor health. It would be wise to get life insurance as soon as you start a family or have other family members dependent on you.

There are three key principles to follow when considering buying life insurance coverage, according to *The Citibank Guide to Building Personal Wealth*:

1. Insure against important risks. The book says, "The money you spend on life insurance should go to ensuring that you have adequate protection against these kinds of major risk"—your early death, major medical bills, and a serious disability. By insuring against these, your family will be better equipped to handle the financial responsibility in those instances.

2. Compare prices. "The cheapest cover is not necessarily the best: you must make sure that the insurance company is financially sound and has a good reputation for making prompt payments on legitimate claims." Shop around.

3. Purchase broad coverage. Get a policy that insures against more than just a few serious diseases or types of accidental death. "For the major risks, buy insurance that covers as wide a number of scenarios as possible."

We hope we were able to help. Good luck on finding the right insurance cover for you.

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Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Setting the standard

Ramon Magsaysay in life—and in death—was and is an embarrassment to officialdom. Even as President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo continues to be questioned on her growing net worth, with her sons, in turn, trying to brazen out questions over their US properties, there remains the example of Magsaysay, who sold his own home so his wife could get medical treatment. The result was that when Magsaysay died in a plane crash, his wife had no residence to go home to. This is just one of his many deeds that accounted for the colossal popularity—and deep reverence and respect—in which the late President was held, and continues to be held, by a grateful country.

It was no surprise that when the centennial of Magsaysay's birth took place in 2007, the Arroyo administration barely lifted a finger to commemorate the event. Magsaysay was acclaimed as a great public servant. And if the official memorials have been few, both out of the Magsaysay family's own modesty and official unease with perpetuating such a shining example of honesty and integrity, there is the Ramon Magsaysay Award, which has proven an enduring, because relevant, memorial to the man.

This year, six individuals received the Magsaysay Award: Krisana Kraisintu of Thailand, recognized for placing pharmaceutical rigor at the service of patients, through her untiring and fearless dedication to producing much-needed generic drugs in Thailand and elsewhere in the world; Deep Joshi of India, awarded for his vision and leadership in bringing professionalism to the NGO movement in India by effectively combining "head" and "heart" in the transformative work of rural development; Yu Xiagang, awarded for fusing the knowledge and tools of social science with a deep sense of social justice, in assisting dam-affected communities in China to shape the development projects that impact their natural environment and their lives, and Ma Jun, recognized for harnessing the technology and power of information to address China's water crisis, and mobilizing pragmatic, multisectoral and collaborative efforts to ensure sustainable benefits for China's environment and society, both from China.

There is our country's Antonio Oposa Jr., awarded for his pathbreaking and passionate crusade to engage Filipinos in acts of enlightened citizenship that maximize the power of law to protect and nurture the environment for themselves, their children, and generations still to come; and Ka Hsaw Wa of Burma (Myanmar), awarded for Emergent Leadership for dauntlessly pursuing nonviolent yet effective channels of redress, exposure, and education for the defense of human rights, the environment, and democracy in Burma.

The common denominator among the awardees is their devotion both to the well-being of the downtrodden and marginalized in their countries, as well as their aspiring for the good of all humanity. These are people who, in a sense, have dared to keep tilting at windmills, bucking conventional wisdom if need be. They have done so often at great personal sacrifice, with community transformation, not self-aggrandizement, as their goal. At a time when we too often witness personal ambition and official arrogance, it is essential to focus on true servant leadership.

© Philippine Daily Inquirer

Equator

There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Since President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo came back from the United States, not a week has passed that the country hasn't seethed over something she's done.

Her insistence on visiting at the wake of Corazon Aquino already drew no small amount of flak. She wasn't welcome, Cory's family made it clear. Yet still she went. Had not Cory raised her children well, enough to prepare them to face adversity, or indeed torment, with grace, she might have gotten the equivalent of a pair of shoes hurled in her face. Or the exact same thing from someone shouting, "Here's your goodbye kiss, you dog!" among those who had waited for hours outside the Manila Cathedral to say goodbye to a loved one.

Shortly thereafter came a blinding series of things that sent the national blood pressure soaring. First came news of the feeling-queen and retinue dining in Le Cirque in New York and Bobby Van's Steakhouse in Washington and racking up a bill of P1 million and P750,000 respectively. More than any other thing, Le Cirque spun a circus of madness around Arroyo's trips, turning Imeldific into Glorific, giving a face to gluttony amid hunger, to appetite without satiation.

Then came the National Artist fiasco. You don't know which is worse, Arroyo feeling queen or feeling judge of artistic merit. She probably figured, not knowing the difference between expensive and tasteful, that art was just a minor province to invade, subdue and pillage. If she could intimidate bishops and politicians, merchants and generals, she could intimidate artists. Right? Wrong! As it turned out, hell hath no fury than artists Carlo-Caparased and Cecile-Guidoted.

Then came the Ombudsman shouting, "The First Couple are innocent!" Which was basically Arroyo—she is the Ombudsman—saying: "Think what you freaking want, I'm declaring myself pure as the driven snow—and Romy Neri black as sin." Well, serves Neri right for being what he is. I remember again Lino Brocka shouting at Manoling Morato, "Bakla!" Lino himself was proud to be bakla, and even prouder to be Noypi.

And now comes the Katzenjammer Kids' houses in San Francisco.

None of these things has gone by without incident. Every one of them was met with a flood of derision and protest, the expostulation tumbling all over the blogs, the media, and the streets. If you're superstitious, you're bound to say all the good luck Arroyo has had all these years has run out and all the bad luck has stormed in—with a vengeance. Which might cause you to caution Manny Pacquiao to stop rubbing elbows with her lest her bad luck rub off on him and get him rubbed off in his next fight.

If you're not superstitious, well, a friend of mine drew my attention to it. "Don't you notice," he said, "wala nang nakakalusot?"

That is the sound of one hand clapping. Or if you don't like Zen riddles, that is sudden enlightenment. It's true, wala nang nakakalusot. No lie has gone without recrimination, no theft has gone without expostulation, no trespass has gone without revolution, or the threat thereof.

Unlike before.

Indeed, unlike only a month before.

Only last end of July Arroyo was waxing triumphant. She had just been invited to visit by the Obama government, and her trumpeters were getting hoarse trumpeting the fact. They did not bother to cite the reasons. But she felt elated enough to go on offensive mode in her SONA (State of the Nation Address), getting back at her tormentors, or those of them who were vulnerable: Jose de Venecia, Erap, her ex-officials. Waiting for nobody else to do it, she crowned herself the best president this country ever had. This was no farewell speech. This was no SONA of someone who meant to go.

You had to wonder how indeed, if she decided to stay, you could make her go. She had gotten away with murder all these years, not least literally, as the mountain of bleached bones of the political activists showed. She had lied, she had cheated, she had stolen, and still she was there. She had bent every rule, she had corrupted every institution, she had dragged the country to the gates of hell, and still she was there. Everyone talked about the death of the Edsa spirit. Everyone talked about the death of the Filipino spirit.

And then in one fell swoop, everything changed. Corazon Aquino died, and brought those things back to life.

I'll leave my thoughts on how, or why, that happened for another day. Though I can't blame people for framing it in religious terms. Suffice it to say here that Aug. 5 proved to be, like the equator line in Ecuador, separating the northern and southern hemispheres, our own historical equator, separating past and present.

You saw it immediately. You felt it instantly. What a difference a day makes! Suddenly, the US visit meant nothing, garbage swept down the sewer by the flood of tears for a fallen hero. No SONA could have been more eloquent, proclaiming who truly was, and is, the best president this country ever had. And immediately too, instantly too, suddenly too, came a profound change over the country. From that time on, from that line on, no exaction would go unopposed, no trespass would go unchallenged, no deviltry would go unpunished.

Wala nang pinalalampas.

The decent people of this country have long been searching for a tipping point that would turn the tide against tyranny, that would scatter the armies of the night. There's your tipping point. The Departed One has just made sure her antithesis would be the Departing One. And no small irony that it came just when the Departing One seemed at her most glorious. The Romans who understood a thing or two about the rise and fall of empires, and of men and women, were wise enough to have a slave repeatedly whispering in the ears of a returning hero as he drove on his chariot in triumph along the Appian way, "Sic transit gloria (All glory is fleeting)."

Sic transit Gloria.

Baguio: Regaining the paradise lost

Looking Back

By AMBETH OCAMPO

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Visitors to "Mansion House" last Monday were surprised to be allowed inside the grounds and the public area of the summer residence of all Philippine presidents since Manuel L. Quezon. Visitors have been resigned to taking souvenir snapshots with the forbidding wrought-iron gate in the background, so that when President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo declared Mansion House open to the public in celebration of the Baguio Centennial it was a welcome move. One senior citizen was overheard saying, "I have been living in Baguio since 1948 and this is the first time I have ever been inside Mansion House."

This must have been the same sentiment people felt when Malacañang was opened to the public by Ramon Magsaysay. With the exception of the Marcos years and days when the Presidential Security Group declares Code Red, the Malacañang Museum can now be visited by appointment.

Artifacts and photographs tell the story of Malacañang from its origins as a summer home of the Spanish governors-general till it became the official residence of a succession of Spanish and American colonial officials to presidents of the Philippines. After a tour route has been fixed and simple exhibits are set up and visiting hours are set, President Arroyo will, we hope, keep Mansion House open to the public for a long time.

Baguio has many other historical places to offer when one is tired of ukay-ukay or the bustle of Session Road. If it is opened to the public, the US ambassador's residence in Baguio would be also worth a visit. Then there are the many old houses that are being converted into restaurants or bed and breakfast alternatives to hotels. The desolate Diplomat Hotel, up in creepy Dominican Hill, is being converted into a museum and will give the Jesuit Mirador Hill some competition for those seeking history or solitude. If the Baguio Country Club's wooden veranda had not burned down, it would have provided a foil for the hotel structure that rose from its ashes. The club is over a century old, having been established shortly before Baguio became a chartered city.

The challenge to Baguio these days is finding the balance to temper tourism and heritage. When one leaves the heat and stress of Manila, one wants a change of scenery. The visitor is not normally drawn to the mall, except that all the small merchants on Session Road have been forced to close. I remember the Old Pagoda curio shop run by an ancient Chinese manghuhula. There was the ATO bookshop in the basement of the Philam Life building, and the bazaars called Bheromool's and Poohoomul's beside the dingy Star Café and its rival Dainty Café.

Session Road was traffic-free and when the cathedral bells tolled for the Angelus at 6 p.m., everyone—pedestrians and cars—stopped. I found this so eerie as a boy. It was like time had stopped and when the Angelus was over, the universe resumed its business.

It is depressing that Baguio is fast going the way of Manila such that when people talk about what wonderful cities these used to be, Manila and Baguio are referred to in the past tense. Manila and Baguio have become history.

I remember as a boy being roused from sleep when the car reached Kennon Road. At some point halfway up the mountain, the car aircon would be switched off, windows were rolled down and everyone braced their faces for the cold wind. My parents would tell us to inhale deeply, to suck in fresh air with the scent of pine.

These days we hardly roll down the windows to avoid diesel exhaust fumes from jeepneys, buses and trucks trying to manage the steep inclines at specific bends of the zig-zag road. The scent of pine is gone and if you want a whiff of this these days, you buy an air freshener or scented bleach from the gas station.

I see history not as a procession of irrelevant dates, names, places and events but a way to see ourselves today in relation to the past. History teaches us that things don't have to be the way they are. Now that Baguio is a century old and its citizens are working for a new charter, they should not forget how wonderful the Baguio of the past was and try as much as possible to preserve what is left of it.

In his two-volume work, "The Philippine Islands" (Boston, 1928), William Cameron Forbes devoted one whole chapter to Baguio. The man best remembered today for the upscale gated community, Forbes Park and the Manila street once known as "Governor Forbes" (pronounced "Por-bes" or mispronounced "Pobres" when compared with the Makati village) described Baguio as a place of rolling hills where:

"The situation and climate were ideal. The hills were covered with thick, rough grasses and great pines, interspersed in the valleys and along the water-courses with tree ferns. The soil, a reddish clay, was capable of supporting many varieties of vegetation: the average temperature was 65F, a pleasing change from the heat of the lowlands, which averaged 20 degrees more. There were almost always breezes, and even in the heat of the day, with the tropic sun directly overhead, the temperature in the shade of the pines and in the breeze was pleasant and cool. The air was fine and invigorating—the temperature at night was such that a wood fire of pine logs was most welcome."

Read Forbes today and weep. Let's hope that Baguio in the 21st century will look back into the past in order to regain this perdido Eden, our lost Eden.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

PROSTRATE CANCER AWARENESS NMC

Joanne Ogo, standing far left, of the Department of Public Health's Comprehensive Cancer Control Program closes with a few remarks after Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, seated second from right, signed a proclamation designating September as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month in the CNMI at Room D-1 at the Northern Marianas College. The Comprehensive Cancer Control Program is part of the Commonwealth Cancer Association, an independent nonprofit organization established under the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association to promote cancer awareness and education, as well as patient support and services. Ogo's efforts were part of the CCA's campaign to persuade men to get a free screening. Also pictured are CCA board members, seated from left, Hans Mickelson, Herb Sol, and far right, John Joyner.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to our loving grandma, Lillian Cruz. Greetings come from your precious grandkids; Dylen, Tommy, and Tho'leyan Dyommy.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings to Rosalyn "Rose" Ajoste who is celebrating her birthday today, Sept. 5. Have a fierce and fabulous one! Coming from your family, friends, your KHS Ayuyu and MHS Dolphin family!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 13th birthday to Danika Borja! Greetings come from Dad, Mom, Vinicia, Davin and the rest of the family.

Happy birthday greeting to lovely girl Hope Ierome, who is celebrating her 9th birthday today, Sept. 5, 2009. Enjoy your special day! We love you. Greetings come from your family and friends Carmen, Mary and Danielle.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Joana Nogis Mesik! Best wishes and we love you very much! May God continue to bless you and congratulations on your newborn son! Love, your family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 3rd birthday to Franishia Jolie Attao Babauta! With lots of love, hugs and kisses from Daddy, Mommy and Danielle.

WINE RALLY HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Waitstaff from different hotels and restaurants on Saipan assist Pacific Wine and Spirits' Orleyne Tabucanon, fourth from right, during the Trivia Game portion of Wednesday's Wine Rally held at the SandCastle of the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Wine Rally host Brad Ruszala, left, and Pacific Wine and Spirits owner and manager Daniel K. Matsuno turn the barrel containing thousands of wine corks during the drawing of raffle prizes in Wednesday night's Wine Rally at the SandCastle of the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Wine Rally host Brad Ruszala, left, and Pacific Wine and Spirits' Orleyne Tabucanon, second from left, confer during the raffle draw. At right is PWS owner and manager Daniel K. Matsuno

MASTERS' DIVISION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Team members of Boholanos-University of Loyola/Raffy's Diner pose with former Philippine Basketball Association player Ramon Dizon (extreme left) during their knockout game against MDX in the recently concluded United Filipino Organization's masters' division basketball tournament held at JP Center in Garapan. Boholanos eventually grabbed the second runner-up trophy.

Young Style

Teen endures hot summers to donate hair to charity

By MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Thirteen-year-old Evan Morris, of Fairfax, Va., has always hated getting his hair cut. The automatic clippers, in particular, he just can't stand.

So about three years ago, Evan told his mom he wanted to skip his haircut and just let his hair grow for a while. Six months later, with red curls flopping around his face, he had an idea.

"I'd known some girls who had donated their hair to Locks of Love," Evan said, referring to a charitable organization that collects real hair to make wigs for kids whose medical conditions or treatments cause their hair to fall out. Evan decided to donate his own hair.

"I didn't think he would really follow through," said his mother, Sheila Morris. "I didn't think he understood how long this was going to take and how long the hair would be. But as soon as he said, `This is what I'm going to do,' he became very determined."

For years, Evan has asked friends and family to donate money to charity instead of giving him birthday and Christmas presents. "I already have way too much stuff," heexplained. Growing his hair was another way to give something to people less fortunate than him.

"Many people do need these wigs, and it's an important thing," Evan said. "I'm glad that I'm healthy and I have a full head of hair."

In fact, his full head of hair got pretty hot in the summertime. And he suffered through some light teasing for "looking like a girl." Older men, he said, never seemed to understand why he was doing it, but "old ladies loved it."

Finally, on his birthday, May 30, Evan cut off his hair before his friends came for a birthday party. As gifts, Evan asked his friends to bring a donation for Locks of Love. He raised $200.

And he earned a comfortable summer. "The back of my neck is much cooler now," he said.

Lauren Kukkamaa, a spokeswoman for Locks of Love, said most of the group's hair donations are from kids. This is the busiest time of year for the organization because kids cut their hair for summer or before going back to school.

"It seems easy to them," she said. "It's an outlet for them to give back without having to have a checkbook."

THE WASHINGTON POST
Evan Morris, 13, of Fairfax, Va., grew his hair long to donate it to Locks of Love, a charitable organization that collects real hair to make wigs for kids whose medical conditions or treatments cause their hair to fall out. On his birthday, May 30, Evan cut off his hair.

Give of yourself

If you want to get involved, but don't know where to start:

- Think of a problem, then research it. What do you really care about? Animals? Climate change?
- Get help. Ask friends and adults to help you. A team can get more done.
- Raise money the old-fashioned way. Try lemonade stands, bake sales or yard sales, and make your cause known.

Here are some books and Web sites to help you get started:

"The Giving Book: Open the Door to a Lifetime of Giving," by Ellen Sabin, ages 4-8
"The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference," by Barbara A. Lewis, ages 9-12
"Take Action! A Guide to Active Citizenship," by Marc Kielburger and Craig Kielburger, age 12 and older
"A Kids Guide to Giving," by Freddi Zeiler, age 12 and older.
www.kidscanmakeadifference.org
www.childrenforchildren.org
www.dosomething.org

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Web sites to help get your chaotic life in order

By KATHLEEN HOM
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

The new school year is an opportunity for a fresh start with household organization. We've scoured the Web for sites that can help keep track of research materials for school papers, ensure chores get done, plan meals and more. Here are a few free tools that can lessen the stress for kids and adults alike.

Chore Buster

Assigning chores is a task often met with whiny complaints. Chore Buster (www.chorebuster.net) makes this task easier by keeping your chore list organized. You type in chores and how often they should be completed, and indicate their difficulty level. You then enter the names of people responsible for chores in your home and designate the level of work they can handle. The program can also e-mail each person's chore schedule to him or her. It automatically assigns chores based on difficulty level and a person's capabilities, eliminating the need for a chore assigner to be the bad guy. Additionally, the chore schedule automatically changes from week to week so one person isn't assigned the drudge work every time. And to make sure tasks get completed, you can factor rewards into your system.

Evernote

Evernote (www.evernote.com) captures information—whether it's a Twitter message, a voice note, a Web page or a photo—and stores it all in a single Web-based service. After signing up (free or $5 a month for premium service), you will be able to access everything you add to Evernote on all your Web-enabled devices. For example, you can take a photo of a business card, grab a screen shot of a sofa on a Web site or save a tweet. Other features include e-mailing and adding notes to the information saved. You can also share everything in your Evernote account to help make study groups and PTA projects a breeze to manage.

Organized Home

If you're old-school and need paper for scribbling notes and reminders, visit Organized Home (www.organizedhome.com/printable) for its more than 170 planning sheets. For instance, a calendar sheet can help you schedule meals for a month, a template can help you keep track of recipes for dishes your kids will eat without a fight, and a checklist can make planning a birthday party less of a headache. To keep all your printouts organized, the site provides sheets for labeling binders. While you're there, you can browse back-to-school tips as well as organizing and cleaning advice.

Remember the Milk

Remember the Milk (www.rememberthemilk.com) is useful if bombarding reminders help you complete tasks. Get reminders via e-mail, instant message or text message, or print out a task list with this free application, which is in beta mode. The extensive program lets you make a to-do list, indicate the time it'll take to finish a task and its priority level, pinpoint locations of errands on a map, share your to-do list and more. And for the times when you make a mistake, there's an "undo" feature.

Zimride

Coordinating carpools to soccer practice or traveling home from college can be a frustrating battle of logistics. Zimride (www.zimride.com) is making such commutes easier by facilitating ride shares, primarily among Facebook users. After typing in where you're traveling to and from, you're directed to a list of possible ride-sharing matches whose Facebook profile you can view. Users then can interact on Facebook to coordinate rides. For the college crowd, there are Zimride networks devoted to specific universities (though no schools in our area are represented).

Organize your move to school

It seems as though every retailer and college Web site has a packing list of items a student can't live without. As you're assembling back-to-college stuff in the next few weeks, check out one of the best organizing strategies we know of:

The way to simplify the college packing and moving process is to invest in a half-dozen large clear plastic storage containers with tight-fitting lids. The boxes make it easy to pack your belongings in the car and tote to your dorm room in an orderly fashion. Fill them with clothes, bedding, desk accessories, toiletries, books and CDs. Tape a list of what's in each box on the side of the container, and affix a big label with your name, dorm and room number.

You can easily unpack these storage boxes in your room and send them home with your parents. They can bring them back next spring. No messy shopping bags. Over the summer, the boxes can stack in the basement, attic or garage until the fall semester. This way, you won't have to scrounge the supermarket for boxes that may smell like bananas.

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Near and far, soccer fans have lots to see

By FRED BOWEN
Special to The Washington Post

Bowen is an author of sports novels for kids. His latest book, "Soccer Team Upset," has just been published.

It's football season, but I am not going to talk about the Washington Redskins this week.

To the rest of the world, "football" means soccer. So let's talk about soccer, the beautiful game.

D.C. United: The local Major League Soccer (MLS) team is muddling through a mediocre season with 7 wins, 5 losses and 11 ties.

The problem is that United is playing too many games. In addition to the MLS schedule, United has played three games in the Carolina Cup and six games in the United States Open Cup. Add eight more games in yet another tournament and you have a tired team that may not make the MLS playoffs.

Playing too many games is a problem with some kids' teams, too. Some travel teams play a tournament almost every weekend, with kids playing four, five or even six games in a few days. Soccer is a tough sport. Any team, whether it's the pros or kids, has to get some rest to play its best.

Soccer trivia

When basketball was invented in the 1890s, it was played with a soccer ball!

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

College soccer: The University of Maryland men's team is the defending national champion. The Terrapins should have another strong squad, led by sophomore goalkeeper Zac MacMath, who led the nation in goals-against average last year. The Terps have a rugged schedule, featuring eight opponents that went to last year's NCAA tournament. The Maryland men begin their title defense Friday night at home against the powerful UCLA Bruins.

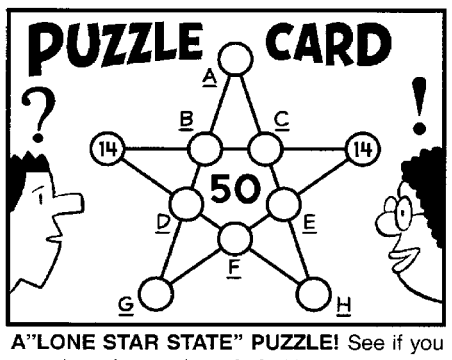
For kids who like soccer, college games, both men's and women's, are a great way to see the action up close.

English soccer: More kids these days are following English Premier League professional soccer and wearing the league's colorful team jerseys. They can watch the games on ESPN and other cable channels. The English leagues have great players and some of the game's most legendary teams, such as Manchester United, Liverpool and Arsenal.

This season, I am rooting for the not-so-legendary Burnley club. In the 20-team Premier League, the three with the worst records at the end of each season are demoted to the second division. The three teams with the best records in the second division are promoted to the Premier League.

The Clarets, as the Burnley team is called, returned to the Premier League after 33 long years in the second division. Burnley even beat mighty Manchester United, 1-0, in an early match.

So if soccer is your game, there are plenty of games to choose from. After all, it's football season.



A"LONE STAR STATE" PUZZLE! See if you can place the numbers 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16 and 18 in the empty circles above so that the four numbers in any straight line add up to 50.

Our answer: A=11, B=13, C=9, D=10, E=12, F=8, G=16, H=18.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

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Illustrated by David Coulson

THE PYRAMID OF WORD POWER!

See if you can belt out the pyramid words before the first act is over. Starting with the given word BARITONES, at the bottom of our word pyramid, try dropping one letter at a time as you work your way up , so that the remaining letters, at each level, spell out a new word. The following helpful hints are in ascending order, beginning with BARITONES.

1. Male singers.
2. People who guarantee things.
3. More restless or fidgety (slang).
4. Literary attack on vice or folly.
5. Extremely angry.
6. A salty liquid.
7. Type of museum.
8. Ancient sun god.
9. Chess piece (abbr.)

Answers: (from the bottom up): Baritones, notaries, satiser, satire, irate, tear, art, Ra, R (Rook).

A"SCALY" PROBLEM! When Fred was asked how much the fish he caught weighed, he said: "It weighed 10 pounds, plus half its weight." Can you figure out how much it weighed?

Answer: The fish weighed 20 pounds.

FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE! In the word square at the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "PLANES." See if you can replace these letters in the squares so that you will have four 3-letter words across and three 4-letter words down. Time limit: 60 seconds.

P	E	
L	A	E
A	E	
N	E	T
E		
S		

Answers: (Across): Eel, ape, ten, set. (Down): Eats, epee, lent.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was Canadian actor and comedian Leslie Nielsen who made the following sage observation: "Doing nothing is very hard to do ... you never know when you're finished."

■ A 22-year-old man who was trying to board a flight in Cairo, Egypt, bound for Saudi Arabia was recently stopped by security officers when the X-ray of his hand luggage showed some strange results. It seems that the man was attempting to transport 250 baby crocodiles and—wait for it—a live cobra. (Animal lovers will be pleased to learn that the creatures were not harmed; they were turned over to the Cairo Zoo.)

■ In Thailand, it is illegal to step on any of that nation's currency.

■ Are you a cacographer? You may not be, but if you spend any time at all online you've certainly run across a few. A cacographer is someone who can't quite grasp the rules of spelling.

■ Researchers in Greece who recently completed a study on napping found that men who nap at least three times a week were at a 37 percent lower risk for heart-related death. So now you have an excuse to do what you want to do anyway.

■ If you've ever had to navigate the transportation systems throughout Walt Disney World in Florida, you might not be surprised to learn that the theme park complex covers 47 square miles. To put the figure in perspective, that's twice the size of Manhattan Island.

■ It's possible for a nectarine tree to grow from a peach pit, and vice versa.

■ A man named Robert Boyd entered a lingerie shop and attempted to hold up the store using a Japanese sword. A fan of video games, Boyd claimed in his defense that at the time of the holdup, he believed he was an elf.

■ ■ ■

■ Thought for the Day: "Only the madman is absolutely sure."—Robert Anton Wilson

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MAGIC MAZE — SPRINGS : CITIES

V O U Q N J G N D Z W T Q N K
H D D A X U R O P M J G D A X
V S Q A N K I R F D A X V T Q
O M J H R F C A W A Y D W U R
P N L J H O F H G A D N C B R
Z X E X C E L S I O R O K E U
V T R Q U O M O K I T M C C H
H F D L B Z Y W C T O A O I P
V T B R Q Y D N A S H I R L L
O N L K I H F G D C A D A A U
Z X N O D L E W W R E V L I S

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Alice	Diamond	Sandy	Sulphur
Blue	Excelsior	Saratoga	Warm
Coral	Hot	Sharon	Weldon
Cottage	Rock	Silver	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	x		+		17
+		–		÷	
	x		÷		21
+		x		+	
	–		x		16
17		15		8	

1 2 4 5 6 7 8 9 9

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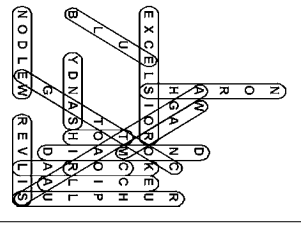
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

	8		15		17
16	4	x	5	–	9
	+		x		+
21	2	÷	6	x	7
	÷		–		+
17	8	+	9	x	1

Farms aren't dog dumping grounds

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Twice this year already, I've had dogs left on the doorstep of my farmhouse, including a new litter of puppies. People must assume that my few acres are perfect to let these dogs roam free, when in fact this is a working farm with little extra time for taking care of other people's pets. Sadly, I've had to take most of these dogs to the local shelter. Can you remind readers that pets are not simply problems that can be dumped when the going gets tough?—Shirley in Putney, Vt.

DEAR SHIRLEY: Pet abandonment, especially of dogs, has become much more common in these difficult economic times. But that doesn't excuse the act.

Abandoned pets are exposed to all sorts of dangers from both nature and man. Dogs are not wolves—they do not thrive in the wild. Dogs have developed a symbiotic relationship with humans, meaning they rely on us for food and care. They're also devoted pack animals, so when they are left by the side of the road—essentially kicked out of their pack—the psychological damage is devastating. An abandoned dog, even if lucky enough to be adopted by someone else, is never the same dog that was left behind.

If you're going through tough times economically and caring for your pet is straining your finances, don't go it alone. Tell someone you're having trouble—a family member, your pet's veterinarian, a friend. Contact the local Humane Society (or your shelter) and ask for advice. There are low-cost pet care resources available in most communities.

If the dog's behavior is a problem, there are also resources available. Pick up "Don't Dump the Dog: Outrageous Stories and Simple Solutions to Your Worst Dog Behavior Problems" by Randy Grim (Sky Horse Publishing), who founded a rescue center for stray dogs. Don't just give up on your companion.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Have a colorful day with salad spinner art

When your plastic salad spinner gets old and dingy, you might decide it's time for a new one ... but don't throw out the old one! Salad spinners make terrific, surprise painting gadgets. Let me take you for a spin!

Here's the stuff you need:

■ Salad spinner

■ White or solid-color plain paper plates trimmed to fit the bottom of the spinner

■ Soft clay, plaster tack or double-sided tape

■ Assortment of acrylic craft paints in squeeze bottles

■ Glitter (optional)

Here's the fun:

1. Take the lid off the salad spinner and set a plate in the middle. To hold it in place, fix the plate with a piece of clay, plaster tack or double-sided tape to the little nodule at the center of the bottom of the spinner.

2. Pick your paints. Bright colors give the finished product a lot of snap. Drop puddles of paint at or near the center of the plate. Add a few blobs here and there, and some tiny dots all around. If the paint is rather thick, thin it out a bit before putting it on the plate.

3. Pop the top of the spinner back on and give the crank a whirl. Spin it around for 5-10 seconds, let it wind down and then take the top off. It's so much fun to see the explosion of color with results that are always a surprise. If you wish, add more paint and a pinch of glitter, and then spin again.

4. Remove the plate, let it dry and hang it on your wall or fridge. A few pieces will make a big splash!

Extra ideas:

■ Napkin ring. Take the painted plate and trim off the edge in a curvy shape, then cut a round hole the size of a quarter in the center. Squeeze a napkin through the hole and you'll have a bright addition to any party place setting.

■ Gift card. Spin paint on a plain index card, fold it in half, punch a hole in one corner and tie ribbon through the hole.

■ Photo frame. Cut out a rectangle or circle in the middle of the painted plate that's slightly smaller than your photo. Tape or glue the photo to the back, glue a loop of ribbon to the top of the plate and hang it on the wall.

■ Postcard. Use a postal-regulation-size index card, spin some paint, add a stamp to the other side along with a note to grandparents such as, "Have a colorful day!"

Note: Once the spinner is used for this art activity, do not use for food preparation. Paint will adhere to it.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's new award-winning television series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

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Life & Style

Michael Jackson mourned by Taylor, other celebs

Members of the media gather outside Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, Calif., on Thursday Sept. 3, 2009.

AP

GLENDALE, Calif. (AP)—Michael Jackson was mourned by his family and celebrities including Elizabeth Taylor, Barry Bonds and Macaulay Culkin at a private funeral service held Thursday night outside the elaborate mausoleum where the King of Pop will be entombed.

The funeral began about an hour and a half late because of the tardy arrival of his parents, Joe and Katherine, and other family members. They included the singer's three children, Prince Michael, 12, Paris Michael, 10, and Prince Michael II, 7, known as Blanket.

The invitation notice indicated the service would begin promptly at 7 p.m.; it began closer to 8:30.

The 77-year-old Taylor and about 200 other mourners were left waiting in the late summer heat, with the temperature stuck at 90 degrees just before sunset. Some mourners fanned themselves with programs for the service at Forest Lawn Glendale.

A vivid orange moon, a mark of the devastating wildfire about 10 miles distant, hung over the cemetery.

Police had escorted the family's motorcade of 31 cars, including Rolls-Royces and Cadillacs, from Encino to Forest Lawn, with the hearse bearing Jackson's body at the end.

A large, blimp-like inflated light, the type used in film and television production, and a boom camera hovered over the seating area placed in front of the elaborate marble mausoleum. The equipment raised the possibility that the footage would be used for the Jackson concert documentary "This Is It."

About 250 seats were arranged for mourners over artificial turf laid roadside at the mausoleum. Nearly double the number of media credentials, 435, were issued to reporters and film crews who remained at a distance from the service and behind barricades.

The Rev. Al Sharpton, who gave a rousing eulogy at Jackson's public memorial two months ago, posted on his Twitter account—while the service was still under way—that he made a repeat performance Thursday night.

"I just spoke at the conclusion of tributes," Sharpton wrote. "Gladys knight sang her heart out. Now we prepare to lay him top rest."

The few clusters of fans who gathered around the secure perimeter that encircled the cemetery entrance struggled to see much. Maria Martinez, 25, a fan from Riverside, Calif., who was joined by a dozen other Jackson admirers at a gas station near the security perimeter, gave a handful of pink flowers to a man with an invitation driving into the funeral.

"Can you please put these flowers on his grave?" she told him. Martinez said she picked them from a nearby park.

"They were small and ugly, but I did that with my heart," she said. "I'm not going to be able to get close, so this is as close as I could get to him."

The man consented, adding, "God bless."

Kennedy denies affair with Kopechne in new memoir

AP

In a July 25, 1969 file photo Sen. Edward Kennedy is escorted by troopers as he leaves court in Edgartown, Mass., after pleading guilty to a charge of leaving the scene of the accident which killed aide Mary Jo Kopechne.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sen. Edward M. Kennedy said in a new book that he was not romantically involved with young Mary Jo Kopechne and that he never escaped the despair he felt after she died in the 1969 car crash that has been seared into the national consciousness as "Chappaquiddick."

He acknowledged that he enjoyed women and drink—sometimes too much so—but said reports of wild Kennedy excesses were exaggerated. He said he always has accepted the conclusion that a lone assassin killed his brother John and that Kennedy family members had worried about the emotional health of his brother Robert following John's death in Dallas in 1963. He said it "veered close to being a tragedy within a tragedy."

Yet it was the specter of Chappaquiddick that Edward Kennedy, the youngest brother, never could shake.

"That night on Chappaquiddick Island ended in a horrible tragedy that haunts me every day of my life," Kennedy wrote in a memoir, "True Compass," to be published posthumously on Sept. 14. The Massachusetts senator died last week at 77 following a yearlong battle with brain cancer.

Kennedy said his Catholic faith helped sustain him as he wrestled with guilt over the events of July 18, 1969, when he drove a car off a bridge into a pond on the tiny island. His own anguish, he said, paled in comparison with the suffering endured by Kopechne's family.

"Atonement is a process that never ends," he wrote.

The book offers an intimate look at the personal failings, tragedies and triumphs of the famed Kennedy family's last surviving brother. He said he agreed that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone when he gunned down John F. Kennedy.

He also recounted how his other assassinated brother, former Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, asked then-President Lyndon Johnson to make him an envoy to try to broker a peace deal to end the Vietnam War. If Johnson had agreed, Edward Kennedy speculated, Robert Kennedy might have not have run for president in the 1968 campaign when he was shot to death.

Amid the regrets, Kennedy asserted his zest for what he considered to be the good life, but he mocked the exaggerated reports of his personal excesses.

"I have enjoyed the company of women," he wrote. "I have enjoyed a stiff drink or two or three, and I've relished the smooth taste of a good wine. At times, I've enjoyed these pleasures too much. I've heard the tales about my exploits as a hell-raiser—some accurate, some with a wisp of truth to them and some so outrageous that I can't imagine how anyone could really believe them."

The memoir is to be published by Twelve, a division of the Hachette book group. The 532-page book was obtained early by The New York Times and the New York Daily News.

IN HUMBLE GRATITUDE

Words cannot adequately express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all our relatives and friends for the kind expression to us on the death of our beloved Father.

Jesus Castro Dela Cruz

Thank you for sharing our sorrow. Your most comforting expression of sympathy, kindness, prayers and thoughtfulness are more deeply appreciated than any words of thanks can ever be expressed.

Please be assured that you will always be remembered in our thoughts and prayers.

Thank you and God Bless you all!

Children and Family

Malaysian Muslims allowed at Black Eyed Peas gig

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—The Malaysian government has agreed to let Muslims attend a concert by U.S. hip-hop stars Black Eyed Peas, reversing an earlier ban imposed because the show is sponsored by an alcoholic beverage company, officials said Wednesday.

Ticket sales opened to Muslims on Wednesday for the Sept. 25 show, backed by Irish beer giant Guinness, said Bonor Seen, marketing manager for organizer Artiste World Entertainment.

A Culture Ministry official, who declined to be named citing ministry policy, said the ban was lifted late last week and a letter was sent to the organizer.

She did not give further details or say why the government lifted the ban, which had caused an outcry in the Muslim-majority nation.

The protest reflects growing conflicts between moderate and conservative Muslims, including many occupying positions of power in the government and judiciary, in a country that has long been considered a moderate society in the Islamic world.

Government regulations forbid alcohol companies from organizing public concerts. But this one—part of worldwide celebrations marking the 250th anniversary of Guinness' flagship brewery in Dublin—was allowed in order to boost tourism, although with the initial condition that Muslims would be kept away.

The controversy is the latest over alcohol in Malaysia, where 60 percent of the 28 million people are Muslims who are governed by Islamic Shariah laws. Ethnic Chinese, Indians and other non-Muslims are governed by civil laws and can buy and drink alcohol.

Russell Crowe challenges columnist to bike duel

SYDNEY (AP)—An Australian newspaper mocked Russell Crowe for smoking and shoveling down a fatty meal during a recent bike ride, so the notoriously salty actor set out to prove he is still in gladiator shape—by challenging the paper's gossip columnist to a duel by bicycle.

Crowe, who has been photographed looking slimmer in recent months, was apparently none too pleased by a column published in Sydney's The Daily Telegraph on Tuesday entitled "Smokes and fatty foods the fitness regime for Rusty." The paper mocked Crowe after he was photographed pausing during a recent bike ride with his personal trainer to puff on a cigarette and chow down on three tacos and a soft drink.

In this Wednesday, Sept. 21, 2005 file photo, Australian actor Russell Crowe arrives for the Australian premier of his latest movie, Cinderella Man, in Sydney, Australia.

AP

In a story published Friday, the paper said Crowe's spokesman called up gossip columnist Annette Sharp the next day and said, "Get on your bike. Russell wants you to go riding with him. Are you ready to die?"

Sharp accepted the challenge and the pair met a dawn for a 12-mile (20-kilometer) ride through the city. Video of the race shows Sharp struggling to keep up while Crowe zooms along unfazed. At one point, Sharp fell off her bike.

Still, Crowe gave Sharp some credit, telling her she was a better biker than Australian director Baz Luhrmann. "You're twice the man Baz is," he said.

Crowe's manager Grant Vandenberg had no comment. "I think everything's been said in the paper," he said.

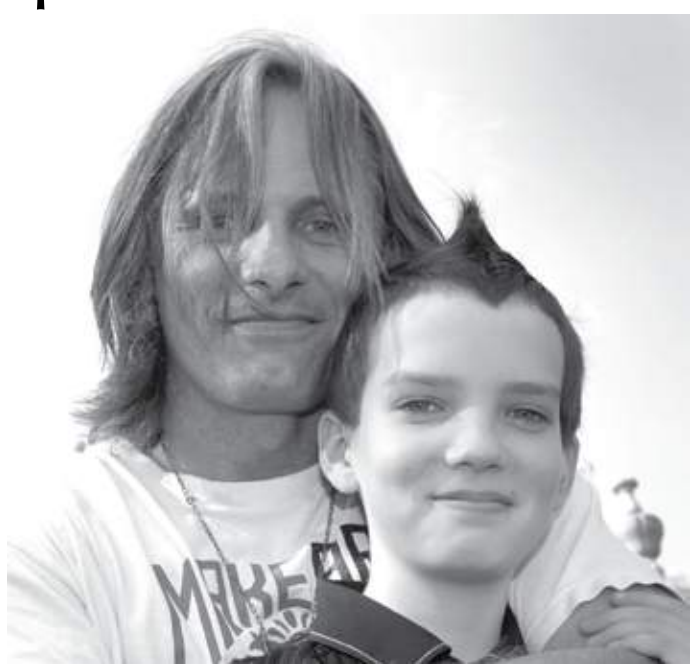
'The Road' premieres at Venice

VENICE, Italy (AP)—Viggo Mortensen and Kodi Smit-McPhee play father and son on a harrowing and hopeless journey in the film adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's devastating novel "The Road," premiering Thursday at the Venice Film Festival.

The movie, like the Pulitzer-prize winning book, is bleak, a search for hope where there appears to be none, but the relationship between the two actors is anything but.

Smit-McPhee plays a boy born in the wake of a cataclysmic event that has made life on earth unsustainable. Something akin to nuclear winter has set in: The sky is impenetrably gray and the air is cold. Food of any kind has become an extremely rare commodity, creating desperation. Some who survive, many it would seem, have turned to cannibalism.

It is against this backdrop that father and son set out on a journey toward the sea, their version of hope.



AP

Actor Viggo Mortensen, left, and Australian actor Kodi Smit-McPhee pose for photographs before they attend the Premiere of 'The Road' at Venice Film Festival, Italy, Thursday, Sept. 3, 2009.

Preoccupations of the world as we know it don't matter. Neither father nor son are named. The cataclysm itself is never explained, because, as director John Hillcoat points out: "There were no more media linkups to explain things." Nor is it clear how long it has been since the world began to end, leaving the boy ageless.

"The Road" also stars Charlize Theron, appearing in flashbacks as the boy's mother, and Robert Duvall as a fellow survivor treading down the same road.

Smit-McPhee was 11 when he shot the film, 13 now, but he speaks like someone working the trade for years. As he has. His father is an actor who has coached his son, who by now has appeared in eight productions.

The young Australian actor, who pulled off a perfect American accent on screen, said his key to the most emotionally difficult scenes was to stay in the moment—a characteristic that won the admiration of 50-year-old Mortensen, who won fame as Aragorn in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and an Academy Award nomination for his performance in "Eastern Promises."

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Barrymore to host skating event in Detroit area

FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. (AP)—Drew Barrymore wants all movie and/or roller skating fans to join her in suburban Detroit next week for a get-together in support of her new movie. Barrymore is making her directorial debut with next month's "Whip It," which filmed scenes in Michigan and is centered around the world of roller derby. The 34-year-old actress and filmmaker will walk the red carpet and host the skating event Sept. 11 at Bonaventure Skating Center in Farmington Hills. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own skates, or they can rent them for a fee. Barrymore also produced and appears in "Whip It," which stars Ellen Page as a small-town Texas teenager who becomes a roller derby star.

Rapper gets 75 years for fatal NJ robbery

HACKENSACK, N.J. (AP)—Rap artist Max B and his stepbrother have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms for a deadly robbery at a northern New Jersey hotel. Max B—whose real name is Charly Wingate—was ordered Thursday to serve 75 years. He was convicted in June of felony murder, armed robbery and other offenses in the September 2006 robbery in Fort Lee. Co-defendant Kelvin Leerdam received a life term plus 35 years after jurors found he fatally shot one of the victims. Prosecutors say the defendants and Wingate's ex-girlfriend—who took a plea deal and testified against them—plotted to rob two men she had recently met. Wingate and Leerdam, both from Harlem in New York City, went to the victims' hotel room and demanded money before Leerdam shot one of the men

It's a boy for Idina Menzel and Taye Diggs

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Idina Menzel and Taye Diggs are new parents of a baby boy. A publicist for the actors said Walker Nathaniel Diggs was born Wednesday. "Mother, father and son are all doing well," Jessica Kolstad said in a statement Thursday. Walker is the first child for Diggs and Menzel, both 38. The couple wed in 2003. They met on the Broadway production of "Rent" in 1996. Diggs currently stars on ABC's "Private Practice." Menzel starred in "Wicked" on Broadway and in the 2007 film "Enchanted." She also has made guest appearances on "Private Practice."

AP source: 'SNL' adds 2 performers for fall season

NEWYORK(AP)—"Saturday Night Live" will begin its fall season with two new cast members. A person close to the show confirmed that Jenny Slate and Nasim Pedrad have joined the show. The person requested anonymity because NBC has not made an official announcement. Both comedians have connections to the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre, the New York- and Los Angeles-based comedy theater that also birthed the careers of numerous "SNL" cast members. Slate previously partnered with Gabe Liedman for the comedy show "Gabe & Jenny." Pedrad, born in Tehran, Iran, previously had a one-woman show, "Me, Myself & Iran." "SNL" premieres Sept. 26.

Parents can't grin and bear daughter's third marriage

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My daughter, "Libby," is about to be married. It's her third trip to the altar, and her stepfather and I are not in favor of the marriage. After her first marriage—to a wonderful man—she had an affair with a married man who became husband No. 2. Within five years, she began another affair with a married neighbor. They are both now divorced and plan to be married later this year in a big church wedding.

My husband and I do not want to attend, but Libby has threatened to prevent us from seeing the grandkids if we don't accept husband No. 3 into our family.

How should we handle this? Should we go to the wedding even though we're adamantly opposed to it? It's obvious to us that our daughter needs professional help, which she seeks only when she begins a new affair. But we can't seem to impress upon her the importance of taking some time off before remarrying for the wrong reasons.

MOTHER OF THE BRIDE—AGAIN

DEAR M.O.B.: If only for the sake of your grandchildren, you should attend the wedding and make No. 3 as welcome as you can for as long as he lasts—which, with your daughter's track record, isn't likely to be long.

She appears to be emotionally unstable. The children need a constant in their lives, so put aside your disapproval and provide them with as much emotional support as you can. You can't "fix" your daughter—only she can do that—but you can be there for the grandkids, and that's what I recommend you do.

DEAR ABBY: I am 15, and I have been helping my older sister watch her two kids since her boyfriend left her five months ago. She has been paying me $20 a week to watch them six hours a day while she works. I was fine with this arrangement until recently, when she began relying on me completely for babysitting. Now she expects me to watch them every time she goes shopping or out with her current boyfriend.

She has begun spending the night at his house and not calling to let me know I need to take care of the kids when they wake up. I know something needs to change. Am I being selfish, or should I confront her? Please help me.

TEEN SITTER IN ABILENE

DEAR TEEN SITTER: By all means talk to her. It will be a good experience in learning to stand up for yourself—a lesson you had better learn quickly, because from where I sit it appears your sister is taking advantage of you.

Responsible child supervision costs a lot more than $20 a week, and you should not have to wonder when your sister leaves for work whether you'll see her again before the next day. What she is doing is palming off her responsibility as a parent onto you.

You were sweet to help her in the first place, but it's time to draw the line. To do that isn't being selfish; it's being smart.

DEAR ABBY: I have two granddaughters. The older one is 11, and the younger one is 18 months. I know that when the time comes for sweet 16, graduations and, most of all, weddings, I won't be here to celebrate with them. I would give anything to be able to leave them something that would let them know they were always in my heart and mind. Have you anything special to recommend?

ALWAYS IN MY HEART

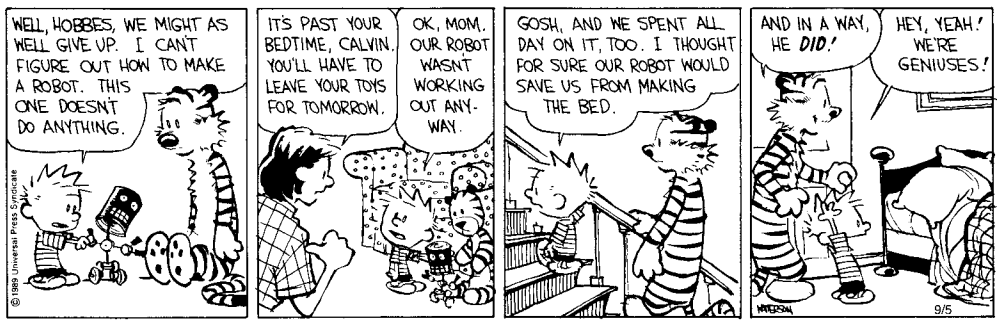
DEAR ALWAYS: Being able to see you and hear your voice would be a wonderful gift. How about having videos made to be given to your granddaughters when they are 16, about to graduate and planning to be married? I'm sure you would have different thoughts to convey to them as they reach each of these significant milestones in their lives.

If that would be too costly, then write letters to be given to them on those occasions. And if you have the means, include a keepsake gift—perhaps a piece of jewelry that belonged to you.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WELL, HOBBES, WE MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP. I CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW TO MAKE A ROBOT. THIS ONE DOESN'T DO ANYTHING.
IT'S PAST YOUR BEDTIME, CALVIN. YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE YOUR TOYS FOR TOMORROW.
OK, MOM. OUR ROBOT WASN'T WORKING OUT ANY-WAY.
GOSH, AND WE SPENT ALL DAY ON IT, TOO. I THOUGHT FOR SURE OUR ROBOT WOULD SAVE US FROM MAKING THE BED.
AND IN A WAY, HE DID!
HEY, YEAH! WE'RE GENIUSES!
9/5

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

ADAM, ARE YOU OKAY? ARE YOU STILL THINKING ABOUT THE DRYER?
IT'S DRIVING ME CRAZY. I JUST CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHERE THAT EXTRA SCREW CAME FROM.
BAM
9-5

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

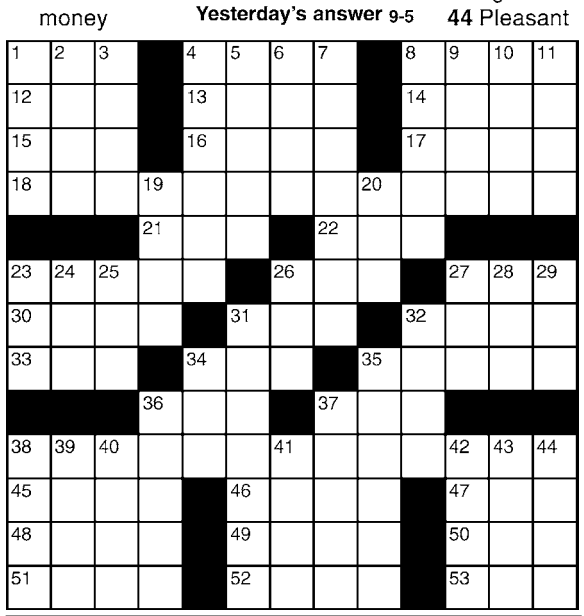
ACROSS
1 Lustrous black
4 Point
8 Felons' flights
12 —-Locka, FL
13 Cruising
14 Verve
15 Whammy
16 Dregs
17 Largest of the seven
18 July 1969 newsmaker
21 Pompous sort
22 Cyclotron particle
23 Hollanders
26 Present adornment
27 Crony
30 Out of control
31 Ice-T's role on "Law & Order: SVU"
32 Mexican money
33 Fuel ratio (Abbr.)
34 Wiretap
35 Hebrew letters
36 Knight's address
37 Seek damages
38 Emulate 18-Across
45 Concept
46 Vicinity
47 Blackbird
48 Huff and puff
49 Prompts
50 Govt. media watchdog
51 Scots' tongue
52 Weird (Var.)
53 Get a glimpse of

DOWN
1 One of the Gospelists
2 Duel tool
3 Cab
4 Light carriage with a folding top
5 AOL clientele
6 Appear
7 Ardor
8 Memorize
9 Too
10 Primary
11 Unforeseen problem
19 Don't have
20 AAA job
23 Beavers' construct
24 Ref
25 Dress
26 Ginormous
27 Energy
28 Blond shade
29 Part of UCLA
31 Heater
32 Verse
34 Resume
35 Nauseated
36 Emulate Oksana Baiul
37 Transparent
38 Use a squeegee
39 Month after Shevat
40 Photog's choice
41 Verifiable
42 Lummoxes
43 Never again?
44 Pleasant

Solution time: 27 mins.

P	T	A	■	E	T	C	■	B	R	U	T	E
R	E	M	■	C	O	O	■	O	U	S	E	L
O	R	B	■	H	U	N	C	H	B	A	C	K
O	R	E	■	O	R	D	E	R	■	■	■	■
F	A	R	M	■	E	O	N	■	K	A	L	E
■	■	■	A	I	D	■	T	E	L	L	E	R
S	H	I	R	K	■	■	S	U	E	D	E	■
H	O	O	K	E	D	■	A	P	T	■	■	■
Y	E	N	S	■	R	O	C	■	Z	O	O	M
■	■	■	■	T	A	P	A	S	■	C	R	Y
H	A	T	C	H	B	A	C	K	■	T	A	B
A	G	A	P	E	■	L	I	E	■	E	T	A
M	A	D	A	M	■	S	A	W	■	T	E	D

Yesterday's answer 9-5



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rose McGowan, 36; Dweezil Zappa, 40; Michael Keaton, 58; Cathy Guisewite, 59

Happy Birthday: Dust yourself off and prepare for change and greater challenges. You have been tested in the past and the experience you gained will help you succeed now. Open your heart and mind to new ideas and plans. There is so much to do that will enable you to excel. Your numbers are 7, 13, 19, 24, 31, 40, 47

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't mistake what's being offered. You will end up paying for whatever you get, regardless. Someone's inappropriate remarks must be dismissed without retaliation. Look at the big picture. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Believe and trust in yourself, not someone who doesn't really have a clue what's going on in your world. You can deal with any problems you face and turn things around without a whole lot of hassle. Rely on your past experience. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't let trivial matters slow you down or hold you back. Put your unique ideas to the test without worrying about what others think. Bypass anyone who is negative and critical. Jealousy could be the reason for any opposition you face. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): It's time to stop procrastinating and make a decision. Once you set your mind on what needs to be done, you will easily transport your dreams into reality. A change at work will improve your status and your personal life. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): If you are too secretive or do things unexpectedly, you are likely to arouse suspicion. The more accommodating you are, the more help you will receive. A love relationship will be enriched by the way you handle a situation. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You have to shake yourself off and rethink your recourse before you make a mistake. Someone may try to take advantage of your talent but, if you are quick to attach a price tag, you will bypass any misunderstanding. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't make a presentation until you are fully prepared. If you do a little extra, you will have no trouble getting what you want and more. There will be plenty to celebrate along with the chance to do something nice for someone you love. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Stop pushing yourself so hard and take a break. A short trip or taking in some lively entertainment or activity will give you a new outlook. Avoid taking on too much or you will fall short of your goals. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You cannot have it both ways. Either deal with the emotional issues that are slowing you down or learn to live with them. If you don't take action, you will not have the right to complain. ✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Someone you love will cost you if you don't put a cap on spending or plans that are being laid out. Added responsibilities due to someone's incapability may bog you down but eventually you will benefit financially, emotionally and personally. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You can improve your life and your money-making ability by engaging in something you enjoy doing and offering this service to others for a fee. Your unusual approach to the way you do things will allow you to stay ahead of any competition. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Discuss matters instead of stewing about them. A solution can be found that will please everyone involved if you dissect the problem and address everyone's needs. Put into play the modifications necessary to appease everyone. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are competitive and determined and can master just about anything that interests you. You are a leader and a good friend and are always ready for whatever comes your way.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

					1	8		
4			9				2	
7				6		4		5
	5		4					
	6			1			9	
					3		6	
2		7		3				6
	3				2			7
		9	1					

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 9/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	9	8	3	6	7	2	4	1
3	1	2	4	5	9	6	8	7
4	6	7	1	2	8	5	9	3
9	3	1	8	7	6	4	2	5
8	7	5	9	4	2	3	1	6
2	4	6	5	1	3	8	7	9
6	2	4	7	9	5	1	3	8
1	8	9	6	3	4	7	5	2
7	5	3	2	8	1	9	6	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 9/04

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

DO YOU TALK TO YOURSELF? **Solution: 5 letters**

G	B	S	G	N	I	X	A	L	E	R	A	D	I	O
G	N	A	T	M	O	S	P	H	E	R	E	M	E	O
R	N	O	B	A	O	I	Y	P	A	R	E	H	T	L
E	C	I	S	B	T	T	T	R	D	U	O	L	A	C
D	E	I	T	U	L	E	I	A	O	R	H	N	T	O
N	Z	E	T	F	B	E	L	V	R	M	O	I	I	N
I	I	Ⓒ	T	E	I	C	M	A	A	I	E	N	D	V
M	M	H	Ⓐ	A	G	R	O	O	T	T	P	M	E	E
E	E	A	A	Ⓛ	V	R	D	N	T	N	E	S	M	R
R	T	N	G	B	Ⓜ	I	E	A	S	I	E	R	N	S
E	I	T	P	I	I	T	R	N	E	C	O	M	F	I
C	S	I	L	E	N	T	I	P	E	R	I	N	O	N
I	U	T	A	I	E	A	T	E	N	S	E	O	C	G
T	Y	N	N	U	F	L	R	G	N	I	M	M	U	H
E	H	U	M	O	R	H	S	Y	S	T	R	E	S	S

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Aloud, Atmosphere, Babble, Calm, Chant, Conversing, Drifting, Drone, Easier, Emotion, Energetic, Focus, Funny, Habit, Hide, Humming, Humor, Imaginary, Inspiration, Itemize, Meditate, Memory, Mental, Motivate, Plan, Private, Radio, Read, Recite, Relaxing, Reminder, Silent, Sleep, Song, State, Stress, Subconscious, Tense, Therapy, Tired, Unintentional

Yesterday's Answer: Jackets

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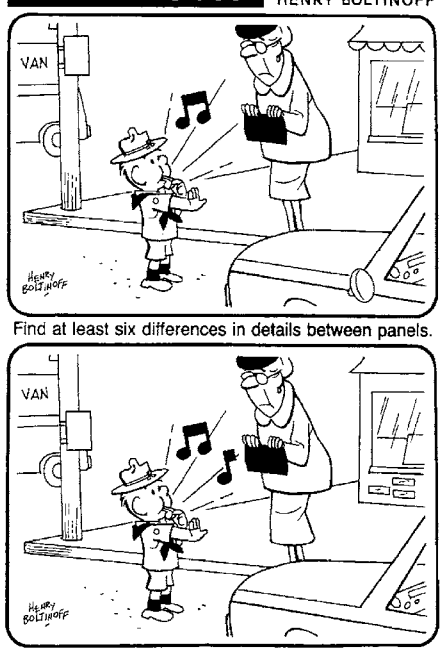
HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Awning is different. 2. Musical note is added. 3. Car mirror is missing. 4. Bricks added to building. 5. Sign on pole is lower. 6. Skirt is longer.

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Wishing Well®

8	3	2	6	5	7	8	3	4	6	5	8	6
B	E	Y	H	S	B	R	T	L	O	A	E	M
7	4	6	2	4	2	5	2	6	4	5	7	2
E	O	E	O	V	U	V	A	L	E	O	K	R
3	2	6	7	6	4	5	3	6	4	6	3	7
E	E	I	I	F	G	R	R	E	R	A	N	N
2	4	5	7	2	7	4	7	6	7	5	7	2
U	O	T	D	N	T	W	O	L	Y	H	O	D
6	4	6	3	6	8	3	8	7	5	7	8	6
T	S	E	A	R	A	L	K	U	E	R	B	E
7	3	7	8	5	6	8	7	5	2	8	7	3
S	L	E	A	W	D	D	L	I	A	H	F	O
2	5	8	3	8	2	3	2	8	2	8	2	8
U	N	A	V	B	N	E	T	I	E	T	D	S

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Super Crossword SNAP SHOT

ACROSS
1 Unoriginal thinker?
6 Shimon of Israel
11 Sack
14 Actress Tilly
17 Fit to feast on
19 Barber of Seville
20 — Baba
21 Conduit fitting
22 Speaker of remark at 44 Across
25 Golfer's gadget
26 Inventor Whitney
27 Playing card
28 Caustic
29 Actress Alicia
30 Spool
31 Karloff's colleague
35 Riyadh's religion
37 Deal with a dragon
40 Iraqi city
41 "Forget it!"
44 Start of remark
51 Bustle
52 Home on high
53 Russian ruler
54 Caviar
55 — Branco, Brazil
56 Musical chord
57 Brandy bottle
59 Adds lace
61 London gallery
63 Always, poetically
64 Bucket
65 Monks' milieus
67 Glowing
69 Sharp-shooter
72 Justice Fortas
73 Writer Hilaire
76 Like fine wine
77 Standard
79 Interstate exit
83 Trite
84 Coaxed
86 Laramie and Sumter
88 By means of
89 Inc., in England
90 South African plant
91 Thespian
92 Word form for "bone"
93 Part 2 of remark
100 Most competent
101 Produces prunes
102 Jacob's brother
103 Competitor
105 Truly
107 Neatnik's nemesis
110 Important numero
111 Absurd
114 Cry of contempt
115 Summer quencher
118 Capek play
119 End of remark
125 Exist
126 TV's "— Got a Secret"
127 "Dancing at Lughnasa" star
128 Beethoven symphony
129 Spear-headed
130 Dress size
131 Long for
132 Panegyrize

DOWN
1 Marseilles mother
2 Adored one
3 Conservative skirt
4 — Saud
5 Baseball's Boyer
6 Brooch
7 "The — and I" ('47 film)
8 Actress Cassidy
9 Miscalculate
10 Couches
11 Boxer Max
12 "— Really Want to Do" ('65 hit)
13 More light-headed
14 Ancient science
15 Actress Verdugo
16 Shimmer
18 Bronte heroine
19 Weldon or Wray
23 Mario — Monaco
24 Reserve
30 Rug type
31 Spiked the punch
32 Dos Passos trilogy
33 Kennel threat
34 Paddle
36 — Tome
37 Hurt
38 Actress Cornell
39 In progress
40 Herding dog
42 1970 World's Fair site
43 Historic org.
45 Make a doily
46 "From — Eternity" ('53 film)
47 Buffalo waterfront
48 Pasta peninsula
49 Refusals
50 — Moines, IA
57 Lost luster
58 Schubert song
59 Recede
60 Mailer's "The — Park"
62 First name in scat
64 Kid at court
66 Hungarian composer
68 Unwell
70 Raring to go
71 Distinctive eras
73 British spa
74 Strove
75 Religious sects
78 Comic Johnson
80 Maintains
81 Baryshnikov, familiarly
82 Couturier Jean
83 Diner order
85 Typical
86 Destined
87 — Lanka
90 "Stroker —" ('83 film)
94 Cops' org.
95 Prohibited
96 "Kookie" Byrnes
97 Mispickel or galena
98 "Bah!"
99 Society miss
103 Bucolic
104 Harden
106 Full of gossip
107 Sea plea
108 Rob of "The West Wing"
109 Midwestern airport
112 Church area
113 Prayer finale
114 Seed
115 Dismounted
116 Art —
117 And more of the same
120 Ideologue's suffix
121 Singing syllable
122 "Tell — No" ('65 hit)
123 Female turkey
124 Bagel partner

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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. HISTORY: In what modern-day country did the ancient Etruscan civilization once thrive?
2. GAMES: How thick is a standard hockey puck?
3. MUSIC: Who is the lead guitarist and singer for the rock band Weezer?
4. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Where was President Lyndon Johnson sworn into office?
5. MOVIES: What was the name Roy Hobbs gave his baseball bat in "The Natural"?
6. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What kind of animals would a cryptozoologist study?
7. MYTHOLOGY: Who was the Egyptian goddess of love, music and beauty?
8. U.S. STATES: What is the state capital of New Hampshire?
9. TELEVISION: What is the last thing each failed designer-contestant hears before leaving "Project Runway"?
10. LITERATURE: Which one of Shakespeare's characters speaks the line, "The evil that men do lives after them,/The good is oft interred with their bones;/So let it be with Caesar"?

Answers

1. Italy
2. 1 inch
3. Rivers Cuomo
4. Aboard Air Force One following the assassination of President John Kennedy.
5. "Wonderboy"
6. Legendary animals like the Loch Ness monster or Big Foot
7. Hathor
8. Concord
9. "Auf Wiedersehen" (German for "goodbye")
10. Mark Antony

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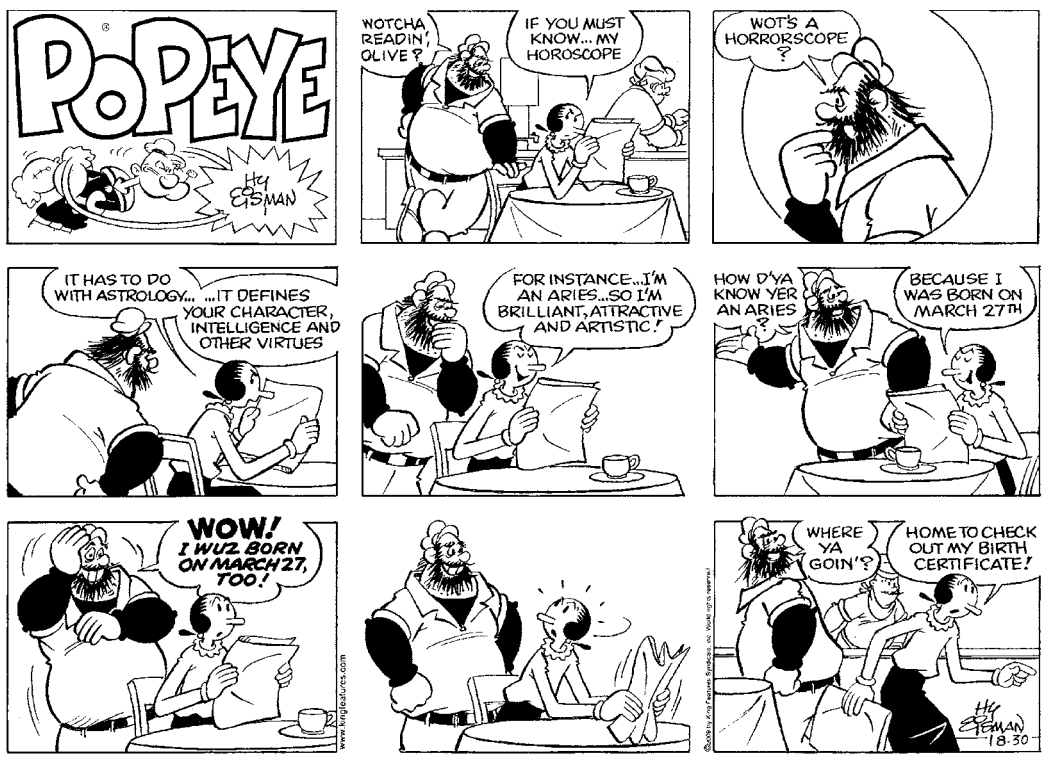
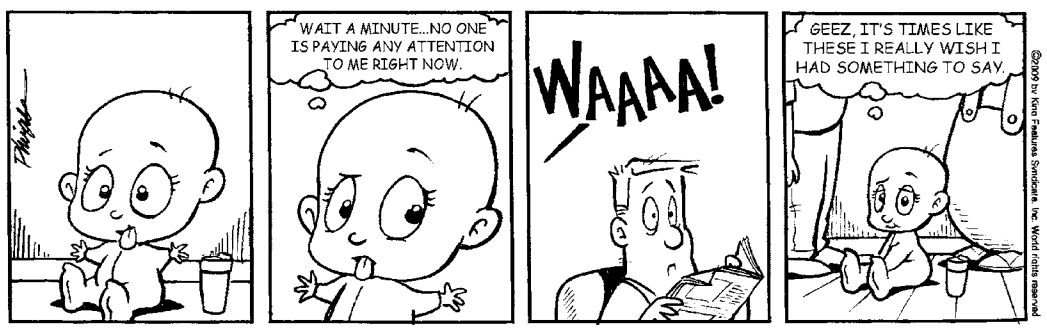
Saturday's Answers


POPEYE
HY EISMAN
WOTCHA READIN', OLIVE?
IF YOU MUST KNOW... MY HOROSCOPE
WOT'S A HORRORSCOPE?
IT HAS TO DO WITH ASTROLOGY... ...IT DEFINES YOUR CHARACTER, INTELLIGENCE AND OTHER VIRTUES
FOR INSTANCE...I'M AN ARIES...SO I'M BRILLIANT, ATTRACTIVE AND ARTISTIC!
HOW D'YA KNOW YER AN ARIES?
BECAUSE I WAS BORN ON MARCH 27TH
WOW! I WUZ BORN ON MARCH 27, TOO!
WHERE YA GOIN'?
HOME TO CHECK OUT MY BIRTH CERTIFICATE!
HY EISMAN 18-30
www.kingfeatures.com

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps


WAIT A MINUTE...NO ONE IS PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO ME RIGHT NOW.
WAAAA!
GEEZ, IT'S TIMES LIKE THESE I REALLY WISH I HAD SOMETHING TO SAY.
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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

They'll Do It Every Time

by Al Scaduto

YOU KNOW YOU'RE LIVING RIGHT WHEN— THE FIRST LUGGAGE OFF THE PLANE IS YOURS···
OH, YEAH!
LUCKY US!
Thanx to J. CAGGIANO, CENTRAL ISLIP, N.Y.
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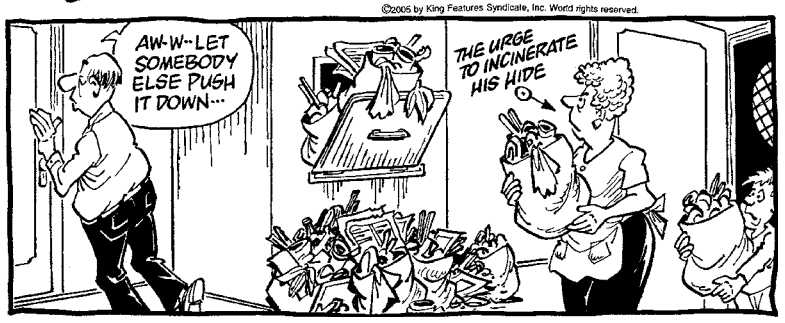
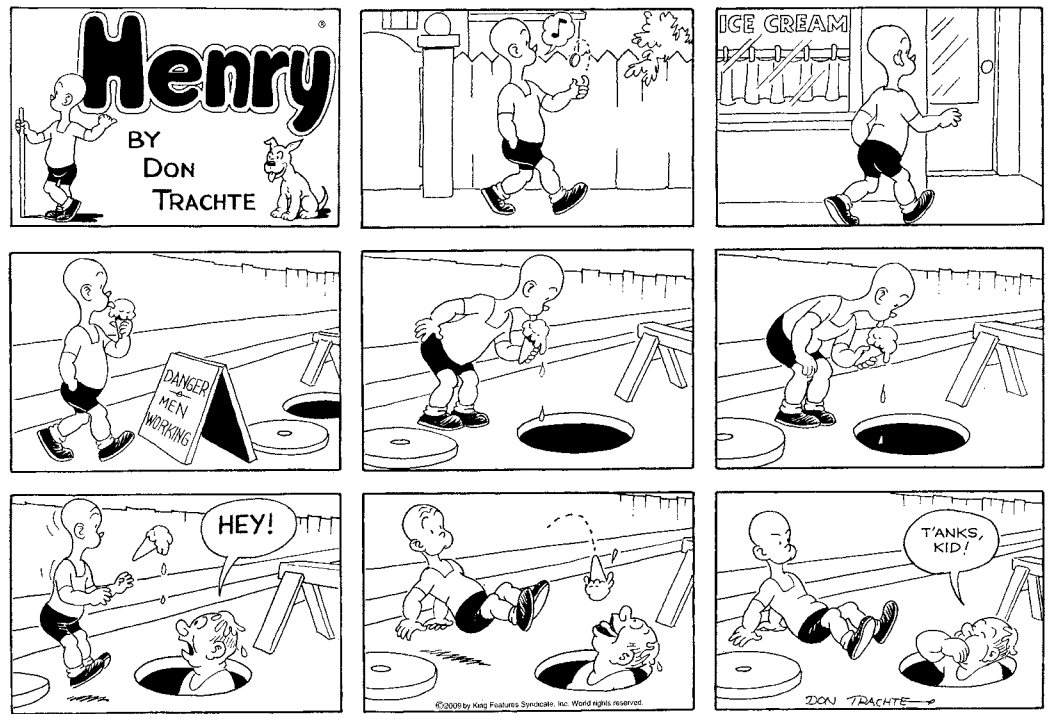
APARTMENT HOUSE PESTS WE CAN DO WITHOUT #1,753— THE NERDS WHO DON'T PUSH THE GARBAGE DOWN THE INCINERATOR···

Thanx to "YOU KNOW WHO," FOURTH FLOOR, ST. LOUIS, MO.





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• 3-Liner	**$25**
• 5-Liner	**$35**
• 3-Liner with picture	**$45**
• 5-Liner with picture	**$55**

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

VERM L ON

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Wanted Live-In Houseworker for Marven Avilla (retired American) pls go personally at Apartment C-209 Finasisu Terraces.

BAR FOR SALE
CLUB BILLY BONES
LOCATED IN GARAPAN
✦ COMPLETE TURNKEY OPPORTUNITY
✦ PRICED FOR QUICK SALE
CONTACT MARY @ 287-4299

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WHATZIT Solution: Color blind

'Believe': Teen from Georgia stuns Dementieva

NEW YORK (AP)—It's not quite the case that 17-year-old Melanie Oudin and her family knew for sure she would get this far, this fast.

Not when Melanie was 7, hitting buckets of tennis balls with Grandma Mimi back home in Marietta, Ga. Not a couple of years later, when Melanie and her twin sister began taking lessons together. And certainly not when Melanie lost her first two Grand Slam matches.

Still, there was Oudin at the U.S. Open on Thursday, ranked all of 70th, dealing with a painful leg and an overwhelming occasion on a supersized stage—and stunning No. 4-seeded Elena Dementieva 5-7, 6-4, 6-3 to set up a third-round match against 2006 champion Maria Sharapova.

All the while, Oudin sported this word stamped near the heel of her pink-and-yellow sneakers: "BELIEVE." The idea for that bit of inspiration came from her boyfriend, Austin Smith, a 15-year-old who helped Melanie prepare for her Arthur Ashe Stadium debut by practicing together in the 23,763-seat arena at 9:30 a.m. Thursday.

"During the match, I had confidence, and, I mean, I was right there with her the entire time," Oudin said. "She wasn't blowing me off the court. She wasn't hitting winners left and right on me."

Don't, though, get the mistaken idea that Dementieva played poorly or showed the sort of nerves she has in the past. Dementieva played rather well—displaying the stinging groundstrokes that carried her to two Grand Slam finals and an Olympic gold medal—and graciously gave credit to Oudin, who now will face the scrutiny that comes with being the "Next Great American Hope."

After the Williams sisters at No. 2 and 3, you have to scan all the way down to Oudin to find the next U.S. woman in the WTA rankings.

"It's just the beginning," Dementieva cautioned, "but it looks like she has a good future."

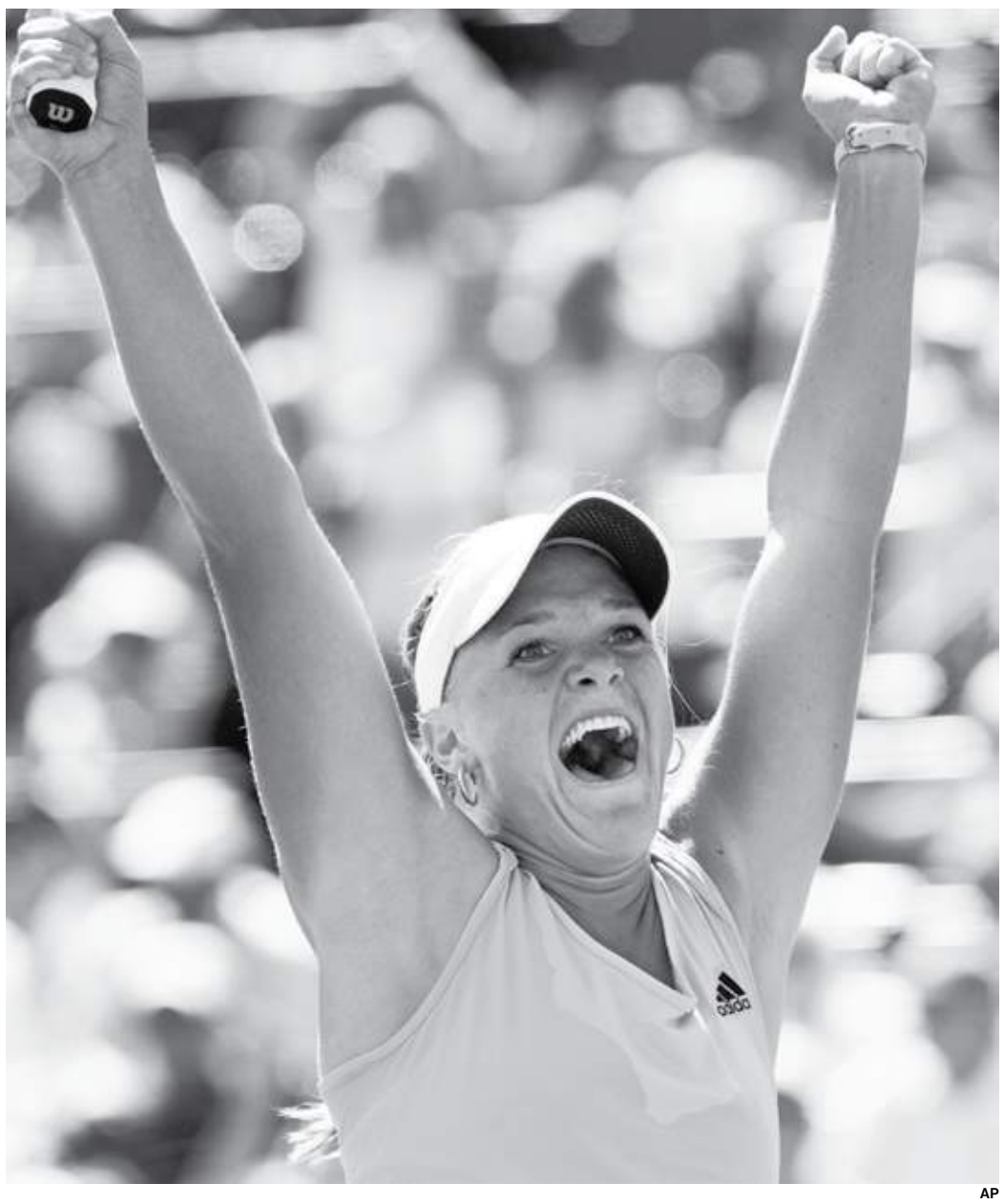
Truth is, Oudin—pronounced "oo-DAN," owing to her father's French ancestry—has a pretty good present, too. This was not, after all, her first such upset at a major tournament: Oudin reached the fourth round at Wimbledon by beating former No. 1 Jelena Jankovic.

"She knows," said Brian de Villiers, Oudin's coach, "that she can play with these girls now."

Next comes what figures to be a stern test against three-time major champion Sharapova, who eliminated another 17-year-old American, Christina McHale of Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 6-2, 6-1 at night. The 381st-ranked McHale was a wild-card entry who didn't really challenge Sharapova.

Looking ahead to facing Oudin, Sharapova said: "I mean, I've got a tough round ahead of me. Also somebody that I've never played against before, someone that's going to come out and, I'm sure, she's going to swing and have nothing to lose—which she doesn't."

Jankovic made another early departure from a Grand Slam event, losing to 55th-ranked Yaroslava Shvedova of Kazakhstan 6-3, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (6). Jankovic reached the U.S. Open final in 2008, and she was seeded No. 5 this year, but her head might not have been focused on the court on this day: Her grandmother died Wednesday night.



AP

Melanie Oudin of the United States, celebrates her 5-7, 6-4, 6-3 victory over Elena Dementieva of Russia, during the second round of the U.S. Open tennis tournament in New York, Thursday, Sept. 3, 2009.

The losses by Dementieva and Jankovic mean half of the top 20 seeded women are out of the draw. No. 23 Sabine Lisicki also is gone, having left in tears as she was taken away in a wheelchair after injuring her ankle at the end of a 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 defeat against Anastasia Rodionova.

No. 1 Dinara Safina nearly joined the parade of surprising exits, turning in her second poor performance of the week before hanging on to edge 67th-ranked Kristina Barrois of Germany 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-3.

"Another tough day in the office," said Safina, who double-faulted 15 times, including three in the tiebreaker. "There is no problem in the technique or nothing. Just in my head."

No seeded men lost Thursday, when the winners included 2007 runner-up Novak Djokovic and five Americans: No. 5 Andy Roddick, No. 21 James Blake, No. 22 Sam Querrey, 55th-ranked John Isner and 276th-ranked Jesse Witten.

Roddick, the 2003 U.S. Open champion and 2006 runner-up, beat Marc Gicquel of France 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 at night and now takes on the 6-foot-9 Isner.

French Open runner-up Robin Soderling advanced when his opponent, Marcel Granollers, quit during the third game with a back injury.

Oudin twice received treatment from a trainer for her lingering left leg injury. Late in the match, Oudin was blinking away tears, trying to push aside the injury—and trying to finish off Dementieva.

That injury, de Villiers said, forced Oudin to pull out of two hard-court tuneup events.

"But this is the U.S. Open," he said. "She ain't going to give up anything. She's going to play on one leg if she has to."

No matter what sort of message might have adorned Oudin's shoes on this day, even her biggest fans did not think this level of success would arrive at this age.

"This is what she loves. She just loves it. She loves the game. She loves the atmosphere," Oudin's mother, Leslie, said after giving her daughter a hug and a kiss outside the locker room. "I knew she'd always make the top 10 or 20. I did know that. But not now. Maybe when she hit 21 or something."

After Oudin's first-round victory, her father, two siblings and grandmother flew home to Georgia. Mom stayed behind and shared in the joy of Thursday's win via telephone. The best reaction came from Grandma Mimi: "Oh, my gosh! That little thing did it!"

Yes, she did.

NFL says Vick eligible to play in 3rd game

NEW YORK (AP)—Michael Vick got the green light for full reinstatement in the NFL on Thursday when commissioner Roger Goodell said the disgraced quarterback could play later this month instead of waiting until October.

Vick, recently signed by the Philadelphia Eagles, will now be able to play in the Sept. 27 game at home against the Kansas City Chiefs. It would be his first regular-season game since he was sent to prison for his role in operating a dogfighting ring. The former Atlanta Falcons star was released from federal custody July 20 after serving 18 months of a 23-month sentence.

"I've been doing everything I could, just trying to do all the right things and make sure I just stay on course," Vick said. "I'm happy with the decision.

Originally, Goodell said he would consider Vick for reinstatement no later than the sixth week of the season—Oct. 18.

"I think he's making real progress," Goodell said at a news conference. "I think he has a better feel for the challenges ahead of him.

"He understands he has very little margin for error, that people are watching him."

Goodell met with Vick earlier Thursday at the Eagles' hotel near Newark International Airport. Philadelphia lost to the Jets 38-27 in an exhibition game at the Meadowlands at night. Vick ran for a 2-yard touchdown, but was sacked four times, lost a fumble and was intercepted.

Vick was in and out of the lineup in the opening half, and was booed each time he ran onto the field. He lined up at quarterback and wide receiver at times, and scored his first NFL touchdown since 2006 to give the Eagles a 14-7 lead early in the second quarter. Vick lined up at quarterback, faked a handoff and ran up the middle from 2 yards 25 seconds into the quarter.

"He met with Michael this morning and I think he came out of it feeling very confident that Michael's doing the right things and is on the right track," Eagles president Joe Banner said before the game.

"I think Michael wants to play as soon as he can. On the other hand, I think he thinks this was fair."

A three-time Pro Bowl pick during six seasons with the Falcons, Vick was a surprise signing by the Eagles on Aug. 13. He received a one-year deal for $1.6 million with a team option for a second year at $5.2 million.

"I've been trying to show him that I'm moving in the right direction," Vick said of Goodell. "I'm changing my life for the better."

Vick started practicing with the Eagles on Aug. 15, but did not travel with the team to its second preseason game a week later in Indianapolis because he could not play.

He played six snaps in Philadelphia's home game against Jacksonville last week, lining up at quarterback and receiver. He completed all four of his pass attempts, but the Eagles' offense scored just three points in the possessions he played.

"We thought that if Michael did the right things, somewhere—probably one to three weeks—would be the likely outcome. So this is certainly in the range we expected," Banner said. "We appreciate the commissioner's thoughtfulness and I think this is a good outcome and we look forward to having him."

Coach Andy Reid was also present at Goodell's meeting with Vick.

"He definitely provided me with useful feedback," Goodell said. "He's very open about the challenges, you know, from his own personal experiences."

Reid's two sons have been jailed on drug charges.

"He told me how Michael's doing and how he's incorporating into the team and the judgments he's making," Goodell said.

"As far as Michael's situation goes," Reid said, "the two-game suspension by the commissioner, we obviously respect his decision 100 percent and support it."

Former Indianapolis Colts coach Tony Dungy, who has served as a mentor to Vick at Goodell's behest, also helped the commissioner with his decision.

The Eagles plan to use Vick in their version of the wildcat offense, and Reid has stated that Kevin Kolb remains the backup to Donovan McNabb.

Vick's familiarity with the West Coast offense has expedited his learning process with Philadelphia. He's said he's content doing whatever he can to help the team win and wants to learn from McNabb how to become a better quarterback.

"I still think I'm a couple of weeks away," Vick said after the game. "I can use this time to get myself in shape, build my endurance, continue to strengthen my legs and continue to work my mind with the offense."

While McNabb is an excellent scrambler, he prefers being a pocket passer. Vick always has been far more inclined to take off and run than stay in the pocket and find an open receiver. His career completion percentage is only 53.8 percent, and he has more career 100-yard rushing games (8) than 250-yard passing games. Vick has 71 career touchdown passes, but 52 interceptions.

Animal-rights activists in Philadelphia have opted not to protest the player, but to use Vick's signing to spotlight their work and have asked the Eagles to support them. The team has been receptive, inviting several groups to a meeting at its practice facility a few days before Vick played to discuss ways to help, including the possibility of financial support.

Division-leading Tigers top Indians in 10

DETROIT (AP)—Placido Polanco hit a sacrifice fly in the 10th inning to give the Detroit Tigers a 4-3 victory over the Cleveland Indians on Thursday.

The Tigers completed a three-game sweep and increased their lead in the AL Central to five games over the idle Twins.

Ryan Raburn led off the Detroit 10th with a double. Rafael Perez (4-3) then intentionally walked Miguel Cabrera and issued an unintentional free pass to Magglio Ordonez. Polanco followed with a fly ball to center and Raburn scored standing up.

Zach Miner (6-4) pitched 2 1-3 hitless innings to get the win.

Detroit led 3-0 before Cleveland rallied in the eighth. Asdrubal Cabrera had a two-out RBI single off Fu-Te Ni and Shin-Soo Choo followed with a tying two-run double.

White Sox 5, Cubs 0

At Chicago, rookie Carlos Torres threw seven crisp innings, Dewayne Wise made a great throw to cut down a runner at the plate and the White Sox won a makeup game between two city rivals whose seasons have gone awry.

Torres (1-0) earned his first major league win in his third career start. He allowed five hits, walked none and struck out six.

Wise, whose highlight-reel catch preserved Mark Buehrle's perfect game back in July, made a strong throw from right field to nail Jake Fox at the plate and preserve a 1-0 White Sox lead in the seventh. Fox was trying to score from second on Jeff Baker's single.

Yankees 10, Blue Jays 5

At Toronto, Jorge Posada homered and drove in four runs as the Yankees beat the Blue Jays for their seventh straight victory.

The AL East leaders won for the 14th time in 17 road games. Toronto lost its fourth in a row.

Posada's homer was his 20th, giving New York a major league-leading seven players with at least that many—it's the first time the Yankees have done that in team history.

Posada went 4 for 5 and hit his 340th career double, moving past Bob Meusel into ninth place on the team's all-time list.

Red Sox 6, Rays 3

At St. Petersburg, Florida, Clay Buchholz pitched six effective innings and Jason Bay drove in two runs as the Red Sox hurt Tampa Bay's playoff hopes with a win over the Rays.

The Red Sox took 2 of 3 from the Rays—Boston's first series win at Tropicana Field since Sept. 21-23, 2007—to extend their AL wild-card advantage over Tampa Bay to six games. Texas trails Boston by three games.

Buchholz (4-3) allowed three runs and six hits. Bay, with 21 RBIs in his last 22 games, hit a two-run double that put the Red Sox ahead 2-0 in the first.

Mariners 7, Athletics 4

At Oakland, California, Bill Hall, Franklin Gutierrez and Kenji Johjima each hit two-run homers to help Ian Snell win his fourth straight start for the Mariners.

Johjima's fourth-inning drive gave the Mariners some breathing room after the A's had pulled within a run. Seattle provided Snell (4-1) with plenty of offense as the right-hander again showed why the Mariners dealt for him just before the trading deadline.

AP

Detroit Tigers' Placido Polanco hits a sacrifice fly ball to score Ryan Raburn from third base and defeat the Cleveland Indians 4-3 in the 10th inning of a baseball game Thursday, Sept. 3, 2009 in Detroit.

Ken Griffey Jr. returned to the Seattle lineup after missing six games with inflammation in his left knee. He went 0-for-4 with a strikeout and said before the game he is considering playing another season if it's the right move for both sides.

Brewers 4, Cardinals 3

At St. Louis, rookie Casey McGehee hit a two-run homer off John Smoltz after St. Louis failed to turn a double play, and the Milwaukee Brewers beat the Cardinals to avoid a three-game sweep in the National League.

Smoltz (1-1), making his third start for the Cardinals, allowed four runs and six hits over six innings.

The Cardinals took a 2-1 lead into the sixth. Smoltz got Prince Fielder to ground into a potential inning-ending double play but second baseman Julio Lugo juggled the ball and could only throw out Fielder as the tying run scored. McGehee followed with his 13th homer of the season. He also drove in the Brewers' first run with a sacrifice fly in the fourth and finished with nine RBIs in the series.

Mets 8, Rockies 3

At Denver, David Wright drove in three runs in his second start since coming off the disabled list as New York beat Colorado.

Wright went 3 for 4, his two-run double into the right-field corner highlighting a four-run fifth inning off Jason Marquis (14-10).

Pat Misch (1-1) pitched seven solid innings to earn his first major league win. He'd gone 0-8 as a starter with San Francisco in 2007 and '08 and was waived by the Giants this summer.

White Sox 5, Cubs 0

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Wise made a strong throw from right field to nail Jake Fox at the plate and preserve a 1-0 White Sox lead in the seventh. Fox was trying to score from second on Jeff Baker's single.

Marlins 8, Braves 3

At Miami, Hanley Ramirez hit a tying, pinch-hit single and scored the go-ahead run in his first game since teammate Dan Uggla publicly challenged his effort, lifting the Marlins over the Braves.

Ramirez's single in the sixth off Kris Medlen (3-5) made it 3-all. The NL batting leader easily made it to second on the play when right fielder Matt Diaz let the ball skip by him for an error, then scored on Cody Ross' double to highlight a six-run inning.

Ramirez had said a day earlier that he "got some people upset" for leaving Tuesday's game with a tight left hamstring. Uggla overheard him and openly argued with the All-Star shortstop in the clubhouse.

Dodgers 4, Diamondbacks 2

At Los Angeles, Jon Garland, facing the team that traded him to the Los Angeles Dodgers just three days earlier, retired his last 14 batters and Manny Ramirez homered to lead the NL West leaders to a victory over the Diamondbacks.

Garland (9-11) gave up two runs and five hits over seven innings, including a solo homer by Stephen Drew. He struck out six and walked one. The right-hander, coming off back-to-back wins against Houston—including a seven-inning scoreless stint last Saturday—has won three consecutive starts after going 1-9 with a 4.50 ERA over his previous 16 outings.

Billy Buckner (2-6) gave up four runs and eight hits in six innings and struck out four in his first start since being recalled from Triple-A Reno on Monday.

Woods on a roll, except for his putting

NORTON, Mass. (AP)—Tiger Woods created a slight stir Thursday morning on the TPC Boston when a Nike representative approached him on the first tee carrying two putters.

One was the Scotty Cameron model that Woods has used in 72 worldwide victories and 13 majors over the last 11 years. That's the putter he was using when he missed one crucial putt after another on the back nine at Hazeltine to lose the PGA Championship, the same one in his hands when he missed a 7-foot birdie putt on the final hole last week at The Barclays.

The other putter that Rick Nichols brought him was a Nike model. Woods studied it with a meticulous eye, leaning the putter on its toe as he looked down the shaft.

Is the world's No. 1 player so frustrated that he is willing to finally change putters? Is he fed up with missed putts that cost him a chance to win the last two tournaments?

Not quite.

Woods was only checking the alignment of the grip on his backup putter. He prefers it to be 1 degree to the right, which slightly closes the blade on impact. This grip was too square, and the glue had already dried before Woods could twist it where he wanted it.

He has several backup putters, which hardly anyone ever mentions.

"That's because I haven't needed it," Woods said.

Woods is nowhere near panic mode with his putting. Even though he didn't win his last two tournaments, he still has 12 top 10s in his 15 starts on the PGA Tour. Besides, Woods felt more at home during his pro-am round at the Deutsche Bank Championship on a course where he has won and finished second twice.

The greens at TPC Boston do not have poa annua, the strain of grass found at Hazeltine, which gets bumpy in the afternoon. The subtle breaks do not confound him like the ones at Liberty National a week ago.

"They're rolling perfect," Woods said. "They're rolling great. I was telling Stevie (Williams), 'Every time we come here, we think the greens are undulating.' Not after last week."

Woods is coming off a performance memorable for all the wrong reasons.

He made a late charge into contention at The Barclays, finishing with a 6-iron to 7 feet for birdie on the last hole that ultimately would have put him in a playoff. His putt never touched the hole.

It was rare to see Woods fail to deliver a key putt on such a stage, which is one reason there is so much attention on this putting. He is averaging 28.58 putts per round on the PGA Tour, an improvement over the last four years.

Steve Stricker, among the best in golf with a putter, played the first two days with Woods at The Barclays and didn't see anything out of the ordinary except for the obvious.

"I don't think he made as many putts as he normally does," Stricker said. "The stroke looked fine. I didn't see anything funky there, not that I was really looking at his stroke. I guess we're just shocked when he doesn't make one because he's made so many over his career."

Woods attributed so many missed chances at Liberty National on putts that often broke multiple times before reaching the hole. He worked some on his short game during his three days at home, no more than usual.

"I really putted well on the weekend, I just didn't make a lot of putts," he said. "When you're lipping out a lot of putts, you're not putting poorly. Those greens were a tough read for a bunch of people."

Woods has a hard time finding much fault with anything this year, except for not winning a major. His five victories are twice as much as anyone else, and he still holds the No. 1 stop in the FedEx Cup standings going into the second week of the playoffs.

The big surprise is Heath Slocum, who was planning a trip to Switzerland this week for the Omega Masters on the European Tour until he won last week at Liberty National. That moved him from second-to-last place at No. 124 to No. 3, right behind Woods and Stricker.

Players have been debating whether Slocum earned too many points, and they tried to balance his rocket rise with the notion that he did beat a field at The Barclays that included the top 124 players on the PGA Tour.

The top 100 qualified for the Deutsche Bank (minus Paul Casey, who is injured), and that number will be pared to the top 70 players in points going to the third round next week at the BMW Championship outside Chicago.

Woods is virtually a lock to at least contest for the $10 million prize that comes with the FedEx Cup, especially the way he has played over the last two months—two victories, two runner-up finishes.

"This last stretch, I think I've hit the ball pretty good," Woods said. "I've putted well in stretches. Some people have alluded to other things, but that's not too bad for my last four events. The overall year has been very consistent."

He missed the FedEx Cup playoffs last year recovering from knee surgery. The last time he played the Deutsche Bank was in 2007, when he tied for second, four shots behind Phil Mickelson. Woods took nine more putts than Mickelson that day.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	86	48	.642	_
Boston	78	55	.586	7 1/2
Tampa Bay	72	61	.541	13 1/2
Toronto	59	74	.444	26 1/2
Baltimore	54	80	.403	32

Central Division

Detroit	72	61	.541	_
Minnesota	67	66	.504	5
Chicago	66	69	.489	7
Cleveland	58	75	.436	14
Kansas City	51	82	.383	21

West Division

Los Angeles	78	54	.591	_
Texas	75	58	.564	3 1/2
Seattle	71	64	.526	8 1/2
Oakland	59	75	.440	20

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Philadelphia	77	54	.588	_
Atlanta	70	64	.522	8 1/2
Florida	70	64	.522	8 1/2
New York	60	74	.448	18 1/2
Washington	46	88	.343	32 1/2

Central Division

St. Louis	79	56	.585	_
Chicago	67	65	.508	10 1/2
Milwaukee	65	68	.489	13
Houston	63	70	.474	15
Cincinnati	60	73	.451	18
Pittsburgh	53	79	.402	24 1/2

West Division

Los Angeles	80	55	.593	_
Colorado	74	60	.552	5 1/2
San Francisco	73	61	.545	6 1/2
Arizona	61	74	.452	19
San Diego	59	76	.437	21

Yesterday's Games

Milwaukee 4, St. Louis 3
Chicago White Sox 5, Chicago Cubs 0
N.Y. Mets 8, Colorado 3
Philadelphia 2, San Francisco 1
Florida 8, Atlanta 3
L.A. Dodgers 4, Arizona 2
Detroit 4, Cleveland 3, 10 innings
Chicago White Sox 5, Chicago Cubs 0
N.Y. Yankees 10, Toronto 5
Boston 6, Tampa Bay 3
Seattle 7, Oakland 4

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

ROTARY STANDINGS

Sparks	2	0
Sonics	2	0
G-Stars	2	0
Runnin' Rebels	2	0
Sixers	1	0
Rollers 1	1	1
670 Rollers 2	1	1
Saints	0	1
Celtics	0	2
Ol'Aces	0	2
Young 670 Rollers 3	0	2
Hi-5	0	2

Trench Tech releases 2010 calendar

Trench Tech Purebred Gym has scheduled six mixed martial arts events for next year in what its president and promoter extraordinaire Cuki Alvarez describes as an action-packed lineup for 2010.

Hostilities start with Rites of Passage VIII: Fearless set for Jan. 29. It will be followed by Trench Warz XII: Battle Brawl on April 23.

Trench Tech will then host Art of War V on June 18 and the event will be aptly entitled All-Island Grappling/Submissions Challenge 2010.

Rites of Passage IX: Indestructible will be set on July 30 followed by Trench Warz XIII: Vengeance on Nov. 19.

Trench Tech will then hold its Fan Appreciation Night before the year ends on Dec. 31 and according to Alvarez the yearend event will dubbed Warriors Collide.

"Dates are subject to change. Please mark your calendars and get ready for a stellar 2010," added Alvarez.

Trench Tech's last fight was Trench Warz X: Collision on July 31 and saw Saipan fighters draw level with their more experienced rivals from Guam.

MARK RABAGO

Trench Tech Purebred Gym has scheduled six mixed martial arts events for next year starting with Rites of Passage VIII: Fearless set for Jan. 29.

It was an eventful evening with the local boys needing to dig themselves out of a 3-5 hole to force the deadlock.

Heavyweights Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fitial and Myron "The Natural" San Nicolas came to the rescue in the fight card's last two matches. The former reasserted his dominance over Manny "The Enforcer" Chong in the main event and the latter bloodied Eric "The Terror" Tedtaotao so badly that ring doctor Bill Weiss had to call an end to their semi main event bout. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Boxing champ Donaire recovering from scary fever

LOS ANGELES (AP)— Champion boxer Nonito Donaire is recovering from a frightening bout of dengue fever that put him in the hospital with a 104-degree (40-degree C) temperature, his manager told The Associated Press on Thursday.

Donaire, a Filipino-born fighter raised in California's Bay Area, fell ill on Wednesday in the Philippines, where he has been living since defeating Rafael Concepcion for the WBA's interim 115-pound (52-kilogram) title last month in Las Vegas.

Manager Cameron Dunkin says a regimen of intravenous fluids helped to reduce the fighter's fever, which dropped to 100 degrees (38 degrees C) on Thursday after climbing above 104 (40). Donaire appears healthy enough to be released later Thursday.

Donaire's wife, Rachel, thinks the boxer likely contracted the fever from a mosquito bite. More than 50 million people per year are believed to be affected by dengue fever, found largely in the tropics.

"Some people don't react to it, some people do," Dunkin said. "Rachel told me, 'It can be dangerous, but we caught it very early and we got him in.'"

Donaire was treated at Asian Hospital in the southern part of metropolitan Manila, one of the Philippines' top hospitals.

Donaire (22-1, 14 KOs) was the IBF flyweight champion before moving up to 115 pounds (52 kilograms). He hasn't lost since his second professional bout in March 2001, most notably knocking out Vic Darchinyan to claim the IBF 112-pound (50-kilogram) title.

Despite the health scare, Donaire and his wife intend to remain in the Philippines for another month, Dunkin said. Donaire could have his next fight in early December, but he's filling the time in between by singing on a Filipino television reality show, meeting politicians and doing charity work.

He also met with Manny Pacquiao, the presumptive pound-for-pound champion who hasn't begun training for his Nov. 14 bout with Miguel Cotto. Donaire and Pacquiao are major celebrities in the Philippines, but their trainers and promoters at Top Rank sometimes see both fighters' focus wander under their native land's spotlight.

NETTERS

From Page 28

flu slowed her down. Despite her condition, she still played against eventual winner Annie Shannon and lost. Johnson had to forfeit her semis game against teammate Minor.

"After I brought Melody to the hospital, a few hours later, she called me and begged me to allow her to play. I said no, as the doctor told her to rest for at least a day," Race said.

"Melody is such a fighter. Every time she goes to the court, she doesn't care if her opponent is much better than her. She will just go all out and do her best," Race said.

Jodel Fernandez also got sick and won only one game in the POJC. She was then relegated to the much lower bracket in the Oceania Plate tournament and saved third place to become the top finisher for the CNMI in that event.

"Jodel played for the first time in Fiji, but showed a lot of heart, playing tough games against those who had been to the tournament in the past years," the CNMI coach said.

Underrated players

Lining up Benjie Decena and Christian Miller with players from the East and West Pacific would make the two CNMI netters several inches smaller from their taller foes.

However, once on the court, Race said Decena and Miller had the same power and effort exerted by their opponents.

"When you looked at Christian physically, you might say, he doesn't have power. However, when he played in Fiji, he developed certain techniques in his shot that made him hit hard," Race said.

Miller topped Pool B of the boys' 14-and-under division and made it into the quarterfinals before he lost to Jones and dropped to seventh place.

Decena was winless in the first three games in the boys' 18-and-under in the POJC before saving two wins in the consolation draw to finish 12th. The following week, he swept his first four games in the pool play in the Oceania Plate before losing in the playoffs and finishing fourth.

"He struggled in the first week, but lost those games in a close decision. In the second week, he improved a lot. Benjie is based on Tinian and has limited training sessions, but he played great games in Fiji," Race said.

Overall, Race said the CNMI Junior Team had a good run in Fiji, having the most players who qualified for the POJC. Race added the team's success in Fiji only shows that the Commonwealth has a strong junior tennis program.

5 ATHLETES

From Page 28

seconds), and Godfrey Quadina (12.25 seconds), FSM's Yondan Namelo (12.04), and Palau's Leon Mengloi (11.91 seconds).

In the 200m run, Omar, who had a hamstring injury then, timed in at 23.41 seconds to prevail over Kiribati runners, George David (23.42 seconds) and Kiakia Tekambwa (23.50 seconds).

Wonenberg was also in Australia for the regional championships and gave the CNMI the most medals with six gold. She ruled the long jump, triple jump, 100m hurdles, 400m hurdles, and the 4x100m and 4x400m relay races to unanimously win the Female Student Athlete of the Month plum.

Wonenberg's six gold was also the most made by any athlete in all three regions [Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia] making up the Oceania Athletics Association.

The Marianas High School student's medal haul in Australia helped the CNMI take the overall championship in the MAC, dethroning three-time champion Guam.

Heo was also a force in the 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships and went unbeaten in the weeklong event en route to ruling the boys' 18-and-under division.

Before dominating the POJC, Heo also competed in Australia and New Caledonia and made impressive games there, prompting NMASA to hand him the Male Student Athlete of the Month award.

G-STARS

From Page 28

to Ol'Aces' repeated comeback attempts.

Ol'Aces were behind by as much as 11 points in the first half, 14-25, before Luther Taylor, Trevor Ogumoro, and Nathan Chargualaf threatened a comeback in the second half and fell short.

Taylor had 13 points for Ol'Aces, who dropped to a 0-2 record. Ogumoro and Chargualaf finished with seven points apiece.

In the first game, Juan Iguel canned the Runnin' Rebels' last two field goals to lift his team to a six-point win over the Celtics.

The Celtics absorbed their second loss in as many matches despite getting a game-high 19 points from Tim Taguchi.

Iguel made the first basket for the Runnin' Rebels and went on to add seven more points in the first half to give his team a 17-12 halftime lead.

The Celtics continued to play catch-up in the second half, but Taguchi failed to draw help from his teammates. The Celtics had only three other players contributing on offense. James Webb made seven markers, while Walter Wesley and Sean Sablan added four each.

Iguel was held to a pair of free throws in the first 10 minutes of the second half, but he had Josh Kiyoshi, Ton Rogolifoi, and Ryan Ichihara stepping up to keep the Runnin' Rebels in the lead.

Then when the Celtics made one final push to steal the win in the closing minutes of the second half, Iguel's timely baskets saved the Runnin' Rebels.

Iguel logged 15 points, while Kiyoshi chipped in 10.

First Game

Runnin' Rebels 40 – Iguel 15, Kiyoshi 10, Aughenbaugh 6, Rogolifoi 5, Ichihara 4

Celtics 34 – T. Taguchi 19, Webb 7, Wesley 4, Sablan 4.

Scoring by halves: 17-12, 40-34

Second Game

G-Stars 43 – Rabauliman 16, N.Mateo 8, Salas 7, Kenty 6, Devero 4, D.Mateo 2, Manalili 2

Ol'Aces 40 – Taylor 13, Ogumoro 7, Chargualaf 7, Tomokane 7, Charley 4, Kautz 2.

Scoring by halves: 25-14, 43-40.

UBA

From Page 28

the 14-and-under and two in the 18-and-under—will play against the contingent from Tinian.

The tournament is expected to start at 9am and end about 4pm, according to Lee, who added that the organizing UBA, table officials, and referees will not be paid for rendering their services for the event.

He said in the spirit of furthering the development of the sport to Tinian and Rota, UBA has asked referees, table officials, and their own officers to volunteer for today's competition.

Aside from thanking the volunteers, Lee also gave kudos to MHS and most especially MHS Gym manager James Feger for allowing the use of the facility.

UBA envisions the visit of the Tinian youth cagers as the first of many by non-Saipan cage teams, as Lee plans to invite Rota players next time out.

For more information on the UBA Inter-Island Friendship Tournament, call Lee at 989-UBA1 (8221).

The UBA was formed earlier this year as a non-profit organization to help improve the standards of the sport of basketball in the CNMI.

The organization's mission is to create and provide a consistent calendar of leagues and tournaments for all ages and to offer a reasonable entry fee so that the islands' youth, adults, as well as its masters cagers can enjoy and love the game

Aside from Lee, the UBA has longtime Garapan Rollers head coach Joe Diaz as vice president, while Marvin Deocares and Dante Olivos serve as secretary and treasurer, respectively. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Trench Tech releases 2010 calendar

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

'Believe': Teen from Georgia stuns Dementieva

It's not quite the case that 17-year-old Melanie Oudin and her family knew for sure she would get this far, this fast.

25

Netters' pains and gains in Fiji

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI coach Jeff Race shared his and the Commonwealth's pains and gains in last month's tournaments in Fiji.

First were the gains, which included Final Four stints for Ji Hoon Heo, Thea Minor, and Rafael Jones.

Heo went on to rule the boys' 18-and-under singles division in the 2009 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships.

"His level of play was a few steps higher from the rest of the field. It was a beauty to watch how he dominated the POJC," Race said.

Heo never dropped a single set in the POJC.

Minor and Jones placed third and fourth in the 14-and-under division, respectively, duplicating their feats in last year's POJC.

"A lot of players from the East and West this year showed significant improvements. They had grown taller and stronger, but Thea and Raffy held their own and still finished in the Top 4," the CNMI coach said.

Minor was paired against Assya Trimari of New Caledonia in the semis and the CNMI netter lost, 4-6, 2-6.

"However, the good thing about that loss was I was able to watch Thea play and how she was beaten. Now, when we start training, again we can work on how we can prevent similar losses in the future," Race said.

This was not the case for Heo, as Race wasn't able to see games where the CNMI junior netter lost.

"For a coach, it was really frustrating that I was not able to watch those games. If I did, it will give me an idea how to work on those loopholes in his game," Race added.

The CNMI coach was also upset that injury prevented Heo from earning wins in the 2009 ITF Oceania Closed Junior Championships played a few days after the POJC.

Heo sustained a strained back and lost his opening match in the Oceania Closed. He dropped to the loser's bracket and was eventually forced to pull out of the tournament, ending his chances to gain Junior ITF points.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Ji Hoon Heo, seen here waiting for his foe's shot in a local tournament early this year, had mixed fortunes in Fiji, winning in the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships and pulling out of the Oceania Closed Junior Championships due to injury.

Brave hearts

While competing in the POJC, the CNMI Team had two players catching a flu.

Melody Johnson won her first two games in the pool play in the 14-and-under before a

See NETTERS on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The G-Stars' Marvin Rabauliman, seen here pulling up for a shot against a Saints defender last week, scored 16 points in their 43-40 win over Ol'Aces in the Rotary caging on Thursday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

5 athletes named August's best

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Five athletes who made the CNMI proud in international competitions were recognized during the NMASA monthly meeting on Thursday night at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Athletics' Yvonne Bennett, Jacque Wonenberg, and Yvonne Bennett, triathlon's Mieko Carey, and tennis' Ji Hoon Heo were named top performers for the month of August.

Bennett and Carey shared the Female Athlete of the Month citation for their outstanding showing in the Oceania Regional Championships 2009/Micronesian Athletics Championships and 2009 XTERRA Japan, respectively.

Bennett took three gold medals and two silver in the regional tournament held in Queensland, Australia. The 19-year-old athlete prevailed in the 400m run and helped the CNMI win two relay races. She also notched silver medals in the 200m and 100m and finished in the Top 8 in Oceania in these two races.

Carey was the first female pro finisher in XTERRA Japan, beating Australia's MTB champion Kylee Locke. The 39-year-old Carey was among the 250 participants in the event held in Marunuma and completed the 1.2-kilometer swim, 25-km mountain bike race, and 10-km run in three hours and 16 seconds to finish 14th overall.

Omar was the top finisher in the men's 100m and 200m races in the MAC, earning him the NMASA Male Athlete of the Month. Omar's victory in the sprint races made him the "Fastest Male in Micronesia."

He clocked in at 11.51 seconds to beat Kiribati's Tanroo Taniera (11.69 seconds) Kiakia Tekambwa (11.90 seconds), Nauru's J.J. Capelle (11.78 seconds), Anderson's Depaune (12.10

See 5 ATHLETES on Page 27

Bennett

Wonenberg

Carey

Heo

Omar

G-Stars, Runnin' Rebels stay clean

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The G-Stars and Runnin' Rebels pulled off similar close wins on Thursday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium to remain unbeaten in the 2009 Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League.

The G-Stars edged Ol'Aces in the second game, 43-40, to improve to a 2-0 record and join Kagman Sparks and Sonics in the lead. Making it a four-way tie for the No. 1 spot were the Runnin' Rebels, who outclassed the Celtics in the first game, 40-34.

Former CNMI National Team member Marvin Rabauliman drilled 10 of his 16 points in the second half to foil Ol'Aces' bid for an upset.

Nate Mateo and Clayton Kenty combined for 14 points, including the last four points of the G-Stars, putting an end

See G-STARS on Page 27

UBA hosts Tinian cagers today

The fledgling Unified Basketball Association, Inc. will be hosting youth cagers from Tinian today in an impromptu one-day basketball tournament at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

UBA president James Lee said two teams from Saipan's southern neighbor will see action in the event, dubbed the UBA Inter-Island Friendship Tournament.

He said one team will be entered in the 14-and-under division, while another will see action in the 18-and-under age group. The group will be spearheaded by longtime Tinian sports organizer Ed Temengiil.

Three Saipan teams—one in

See UBA on Page 27